

Victorian Kitchens

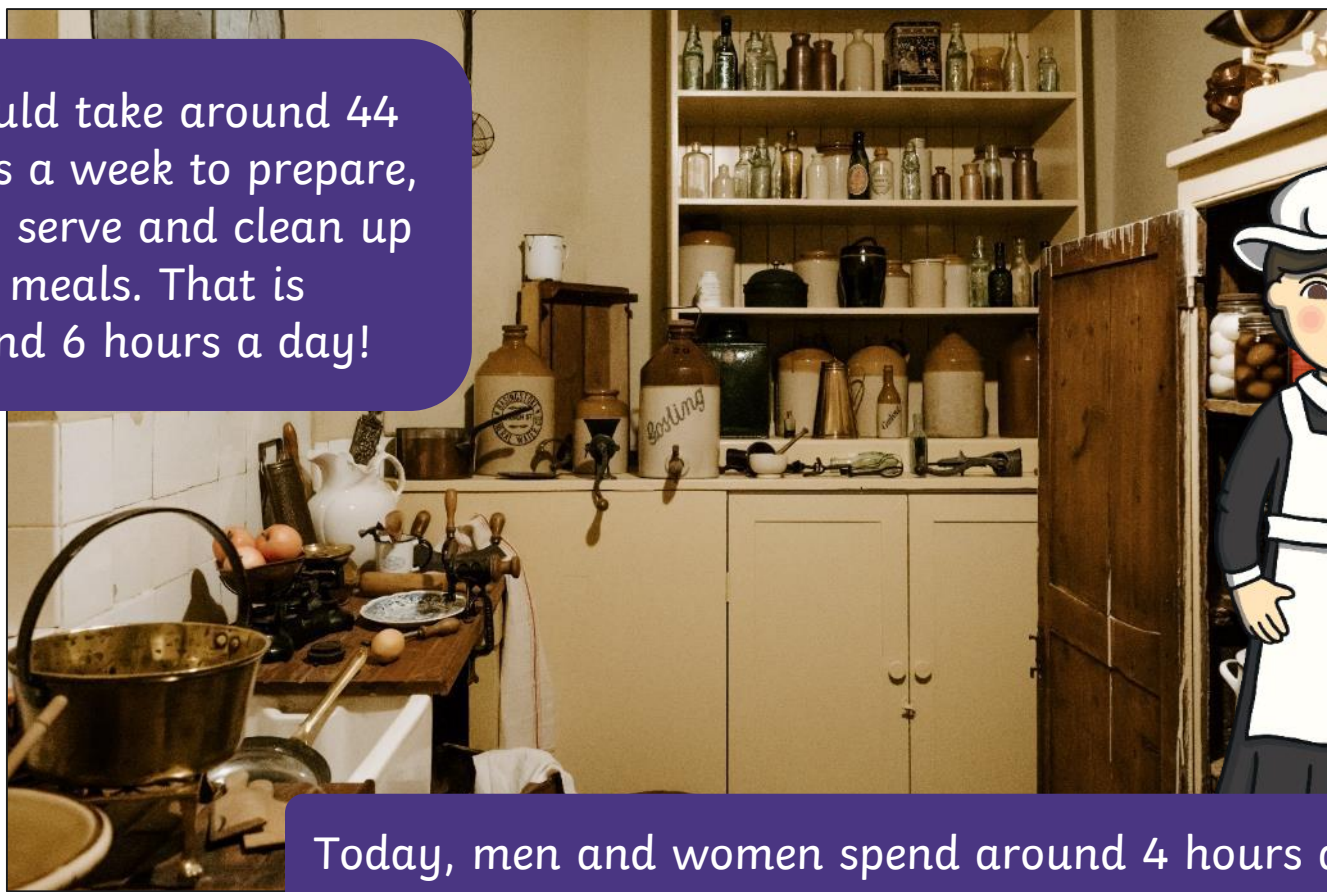


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Who is in Charge of the Kitchen?

Preparing and cleaning up was the job for the girls in the house.

It could take around 44 hours a week to prepare, cook, serve and clean up after meals. That is around 6 hours a day!



Today, men and women spend around 4 hours a week.

The Victorian Kitchen Garden

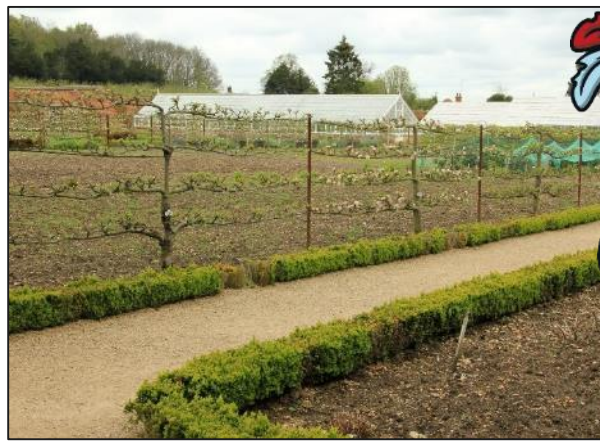


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Walled gardens were popular in Victorian England as the high garden walls kept the fruits and vegetables safe and out of site of neighbours.

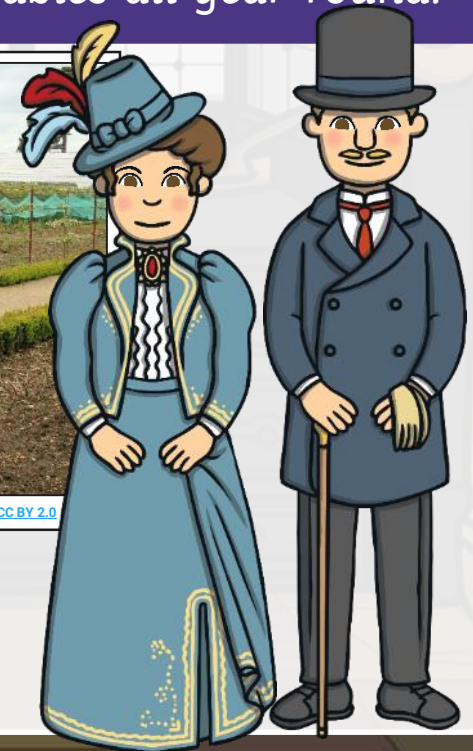
A traditional kitchen garden had four areas with a water source in the middle.

The head gardener (if you were wealthy enough to have one) was in charge of looking after the fruit and vegetables all year-round.



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Queen Victoria had her own 32-acre walled kitchen garden at Windsor Palace.



The Victorian Kitchen Layout

Kitchens would usually be arranged with free-standing, moveable cabinets around the outside of the kitchen and a large dining table in the centre.



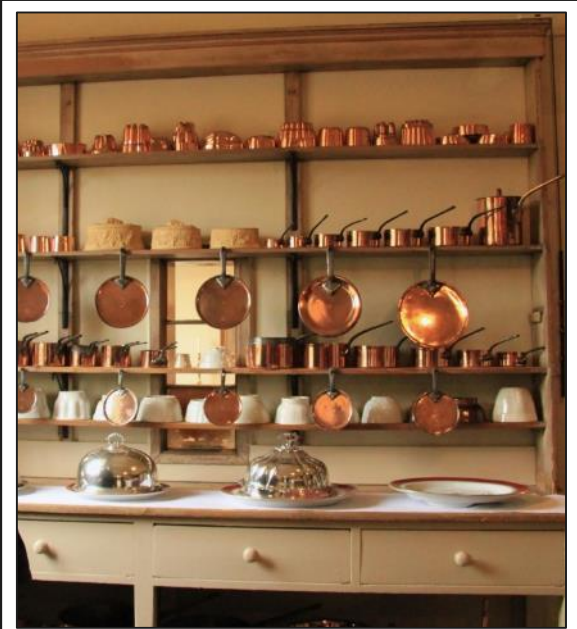
Storage

There was not much to store in the kitchens so storage was basic:

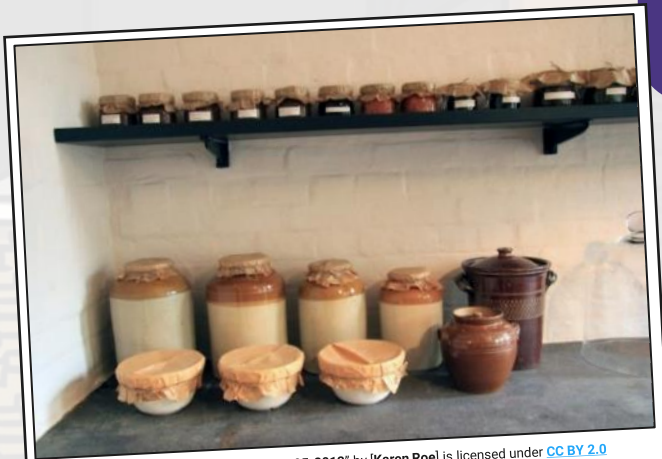
Plates and dishes were stored on open shelves.

Fresh food was picked and eaten on the day as no refrigerator had been invented.

Pots and pans were stored on hooks or overhead racks.



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A small amount of long-life foods such as sugar, salt, flour, lard, canned foods were stored on shelves.

Plumbing

Water was not available by simply turning a tap on. The cook would need to collect the water from a well or pump using a bucket. Some families would even share a bucket.



By the end of the Victorian era, a few homes had the luxury of a water pump in the kitchen but this was rare.



The Kitchen Sink

Victorian kitchen sinks had many uses - they were used to wash utensils, chop and slice meat and clean fish.

Victorian kitchen sinks were made of wood and slate as these were common materials.

Towards the end of the Victorian era and still today, kitchen sinks have been made out of ceramic. This made it much easier to keep it clean and remove germs.



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The Kitchen Stove

During the Victorian era, around the 1850s, they were starting to use gas to fuel the stove by burning wood. This would mean that many improvements came with this, such as: a gas stove could be made smaller, the surface was cooler and could be turned off. As the Victorians were making it more safer than the house to the new designs, also this was the first time of, stove fire stoves decorated in several colours. The stove was much safer as the cook was able to change the temperature needed. It also had different areas to cook on (similar to our hobs today) so more food could be cooked or baked and more meal courses could be cooked at once.

A Victorian stove was usually made out of iron.



The Victorian Icebox

Thomas Moore invented 'the icebox'.
Today we would call this an ice chest or ice cooler.

As new insulating materials were discovered, such as cork, sawdust, straw and even seaweed, the icebox didn't want his butter melting and going to waste while he was taking it to market. They began to make the iceboxes out of oak wood, lining the inside of the wood with zinc, adding shelves place the butter in a tin box, (much like our freezers today) and then place the tin box inside a putting a large block of ice at the top. with ice, finally wrap the ice box. They were then able to store uncooked meat, milk, fresh vegetables and fruits at a very cold temperature.



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A Victorian kitchen may have looked similar to this.



What can you see?



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