

Orange Squash

10 oranges, juice and zest of (which should give you 1 litre of orange juice)
4 lemons, juice and zest of (which should give you 300ml of lemon juice)
500ml water
300g sugar
40g citric acid

Zest the oranges and lemons. Organic fruit is the best because their skins haven't been dipped in wax. Growers do this to make their fruit shiny.

Remove the zest with a grater, or otherwise with a small knife. Whether younger kids are particularly dexterous with a small sharp knife would remain your decision. Either way – it's the colourful outer skin we're after. You don't want to take the pith.

Bring to simmer 500ml (a pint in proper talk) of water; into which dissolve 300g sugar. If you've used organic fruit – you might as well use organic sugar – so when showing off to your neighbours that little Janet and John (Jamillia and Jason I guess these days) have made their own orange squash – you can be even more antagonising by pointing out that it is organic.

Add to the sweetened water 40g citric acid – which will give the squash that mouth-puckering sharp acidity – akin with sherbet fountains, acid drops and lemons. Of course you don't have to add the citric acid – if you want the whole thing to be right and hippy. But kids love chemicals.

You'll get citric acid from the chemist. If your chemist gives you a funny look when buying citric acid (particularly if you buy more than 1 tub) it is because those in the habit of making homemade class A narcotics use ascorbic acid in their illicit manufacturing process.

Add the lemon and orange zest and simmer for another 10 minutes. Thereafter cool. When cool – sieve the zest out if you want a clear squash, however, cloudy is very much in vogue. Add to the sweet citric syrup the orange and lemon juice. Pour the squash into sterilised bottles and seal – leave it for a couple of weeks to allow the ingredients to acquaint themselves. Don't forget to put the obligatory "Homemade Orange Squash" sticky label on, then you can leave it lying around the kitchen when you have your friends over for coffee and really show off. The damned thing is good enough to feature in the August edition of BBC Good Food Monthly.

To serve, mix 2 tablespoons of squash into 1 glass of water – although I've never met anyone in my entire life stupid enough to measure cordial with a spoon.