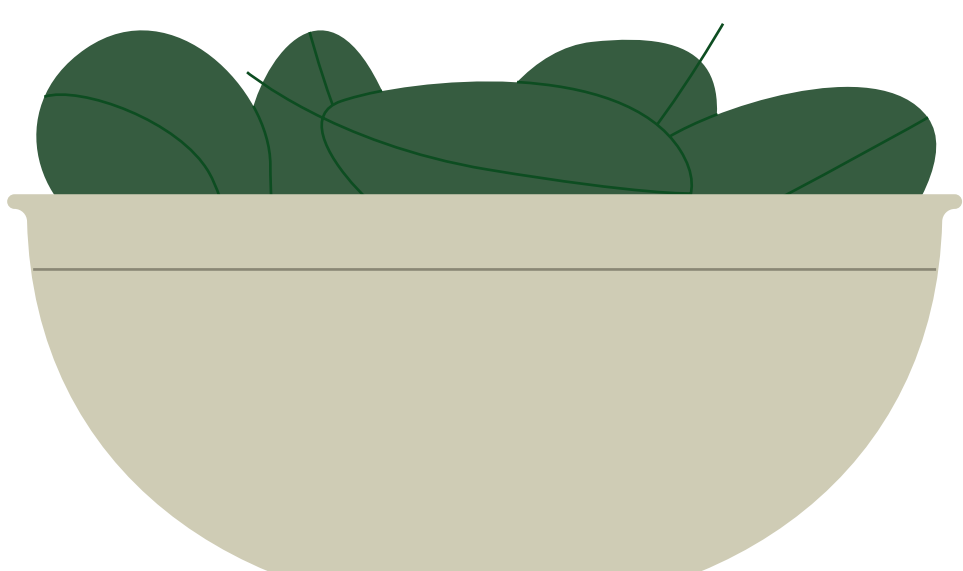
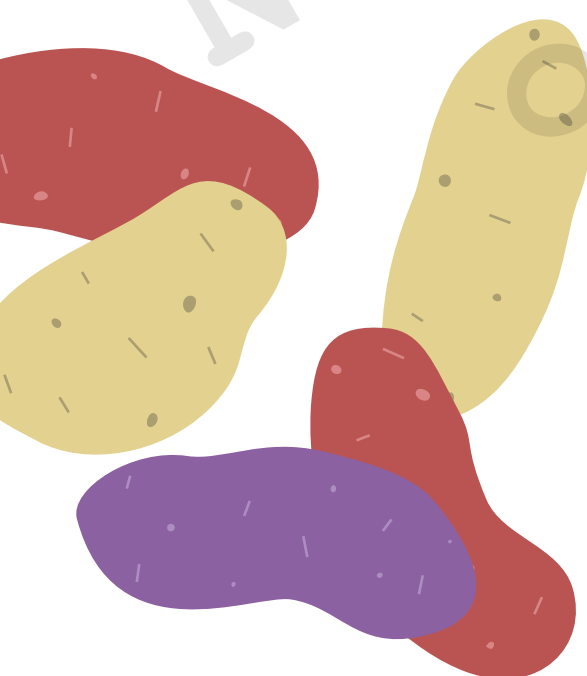
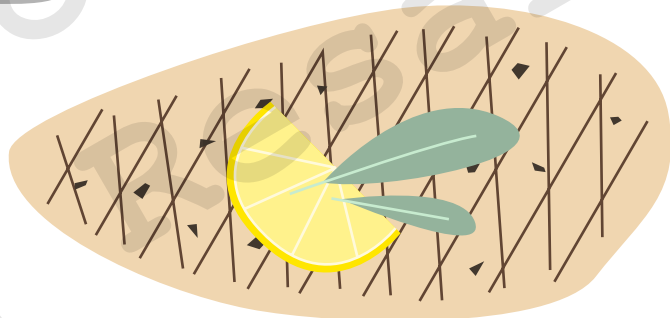


**eat**  
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# COOKING BASICS



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# COOKING BASICS HANDOUTS:

Basic Kitchen Tools and Equipment

How to Measure Ingredients

Cooking Methods to Master

Advance-Prep Cooking

Mastering 1-Pot Meals

Quick and Easy Meal Ideas

Flavor Boosters

Herbs and Spices

Healthy Recipe Finder

Tips to Lower Fat and Calories in Recipes

Make Your Own Rubs and Marinades

Make Your Own Salad Dressing

Make Your Own Sauces

Food Safety: Preparation

Food Safety: Storing and Reheating Leftovers  
and Prepared Foods



# COOKING METHODS TO MASTER

Mastering basic cooking methods is the foundation of solid kitchen skills. Read on for information and tips about some common cooking methods that use your oven and stovetop. With practice, these methods will help you create delicious, healthy meals.

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## 10 COOKING TERMS TO KNOW

1. **Bake:** to cook surrounded by dry air in the oven (food may be covered or uncovered)
  2. **Boil:** to cook in rapidly boiling liquid
  3. **Broil:** to cook with direct heat under a heating element in the oven or a broiler
  4. **Grill or barbecue:** to cook with direct heat over hot coals or another heat source
  5. **Poach:** to cook directly in liquid, usually just below boiling
  6. **Roast:** to cook uncovered with dry heat in the oven
  7. **Sauté:** to cook in a small amount of fat, stirring so the food browns evenly
  8. **Simmer:** to cook gently in liquid, just below boiling
  9. **Steam:** to cook over boiling or simmering water on a rack or in a steamer basket in a covered pot
  10. **Stir-fry:** to quickly cook small pieces of food in a small amount of oil over high heat while stirring constantly
- 

## Broiling

Broiling is used to cook foods such as thinner cuts of meat (like steak), chicken, and fatty fish (like tuna steaks or salmon) and to finish cooking dishes with crispy or browned toppings.

The broiling time and the food's proximity to the heat source will vary. To brown the topping on a casserole, place the pan close to the heat for just a few minutes. A thick piece of fish or chicken takes longer to broil, so place them farther from the heat source so the top doesn't burn.

## Roasting

Roasting is used for larger cuts of meat, fish, and poultry, and it can be used for fruits and vegetables.

Roast meat, fish, and poultry on a rack or sheet pan. Using a rack allows fat to drip away from the food. To keep the meat, fish, or poultry moist, brush it from time to time as it roasts with a low-fat sauce or marinade that has not come in contact with raw meat.

To roast potatoes, peppers, carrots, and other vegetables, brush them first with a thin layer of olive or vegetable oil and spread in a single layer on a sheet pan. Roasting brings out their natural flavor. Fruits, such as apples, pears, stone fruits, and pineapple, can be roasted for use in mixed dishes or desserts.

## Sautéing

Sautéing is used to cook smaller pieces of meat, fish, poultry, and vegetables. To keep food from sticking, add a small amount of oil to a shallow pan or spray the pan with



## How to Make Chili

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of cooking oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.
2. Add ½ cup chopped onions and 3 minced garlic cloves and cook for several minutes until fragrant. You can also add chopped peppers at this point.
3. Add lean ground beef, chicken, or turkey to the pot. Cook about 5 minutes, stirring to crumble.
4. Stir in water, beans, tomatoes or other vegetables, and dried herbs and spices like cilantro, chili powder, cayenne pepper, cumin, and cinnamon. Bring to a boil.
5. Turn the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally. Cooking time can vary, depending on the recipe, from 30 minutes to 1 hour.

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### **FREEZE FOR THE FUTURE**

A benefit of 1-pot meals is that you can cook them ahead of time to freeze for future meals.

- ▶ To freeze, divide the prepared meal into small, shallow containers with well-fitting lids.
  - ▶ Cover the containers tightly, label, and mark them with the date.
  - ▶ 1-pot meals can be stored in the freezer and should be consumed within 2 to 3 months for the best freshness and quality. Defrost in the refrigerator overnight before reheating to a safe internal temperature of 165°F.
- 

## How to Make Soup

1. Chop leftover cooked meat or poultry into small pieces. Select fresh or frozen vegetables, like carrots, peas, onions, cabbage, and broccoli, and (as needed) cut them into pieces about the same size as the meat or poultry. The more you use, the chunkier your soup will be.
2. Heat 1 quart chicken, vegetable, or beef broth in a large pot over medium heat until boiling.
3. Add uncooked pasta or rice to the pot. Bring to a boil, then turn heat to medium-low. Cook pasta or rice until tender (check the time on the package label).
4. Add vegetables and leftover meat. You can also add canned beans that have been rinsed and drained. Bring soup to a boil, then turn heat to low and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes.

# FLAVOR BOOSTERS

Salt and pepper aren't the only options to add flavor to foods. Try the following healthful flavor booster and experiment with your own.

## Fresh Herbs

Popular fresh herbs include basil, cilantro, dill, chives, mint, oregano, parsley, tarragon, and thyme.

- ▶ Stir chopped basil into prepared tomato sauce.
- ▶ Top bean or chicken soups with a sprinkle of freshly chopped dill.
- ▶ Flavor seltzer or plain water with mint leaves.

## Dried Herbs and Spices

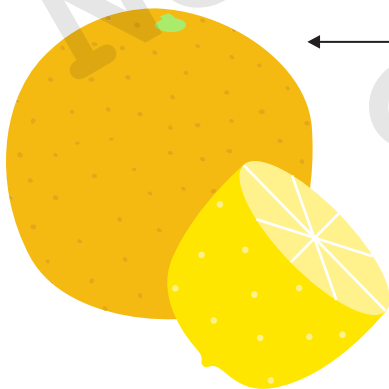
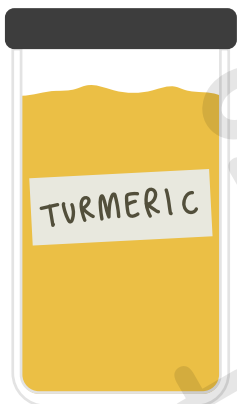
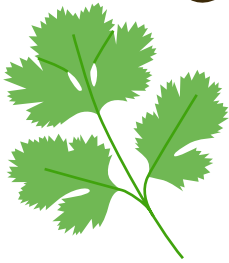
Some common dried herbs include basil, dill, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, tarragon, and thyme. Common dried spices include cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, paprika, pepper, and turmeric.

- ▶ Sprinkle ground ginger on oatmeal.
- ▶ Add a dash of paprika to baked chicken.
- ▶ Sauté mushrooms with olive oil and a few minced rosemary leaves.
- ▶ Add a sprinkle of oregano to roasted potatoes.

## Citrus Fruits

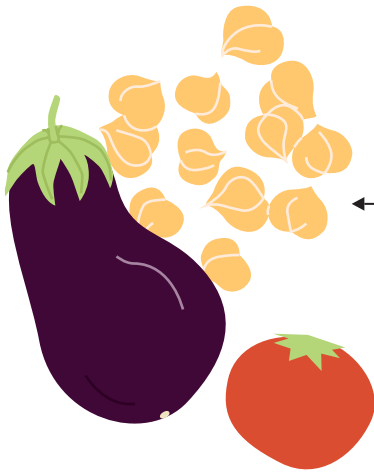
A small amount of juice or peel from citrus fruits can add major flavor. After washing, use a small, sharp knife, microplane, or grater to remove the outer colored part of the peel (the zest). Avoid the bitter white part of the rind (the pith) just beneath the outer peel.

- ▶ Squeeze lemon juice or sprinkle lemon zest over baked or grilled fish and cooked vegetables.
- ▶ Stir orange zest into oatmeal, yogurt, or cake batter.
- ▶ Add a splash of lemon, lime, or orange juice to sparkling water for a refreshing beverage.



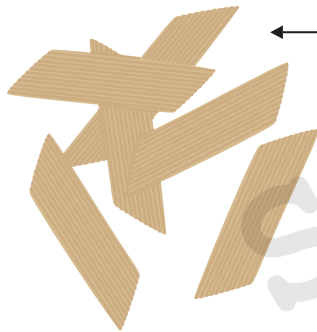
## How to Spot a Healthier Recipe

Use this checklist when reviewing recipes to help pick healthier options. Remember, too, that many recipes can be modified to swap out healthier ingredients or reduce the amounts of added sugars, sodium, and less-healthy fats.



← **The main ingredient is from one of the MyPlate food groups.** This can include lean protein (meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, legumes), vegetables, fruit, whole grain, or skim/nonfat dairy.

▶ **The recipe offers plenty of veggies.** Look for recipes that include at least 1 cup of colorful vegetables per serving. You can often add more veggies, such as colorful peppers, dark leafy greens, carrots, zucchini, tomatoes, and more, to many types of recipes.



← **It includes whole grains for more fiber.** Options can include whole grain pasta, brown rice, barley, quinoa, oats, spelt, farro, or a bread product made with whole grain flour. Bean-based pastas are also a good source of fiber.

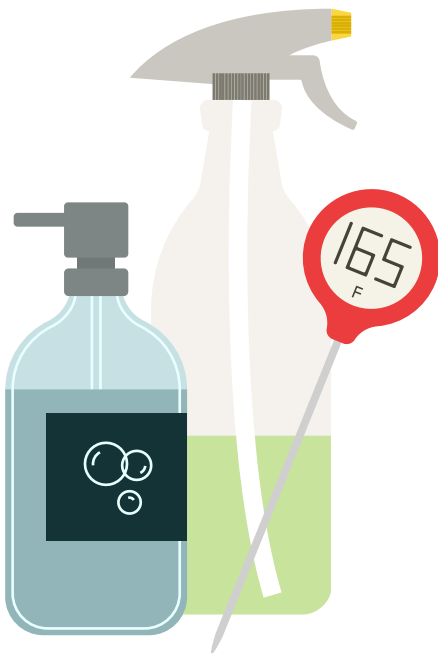
▶ **It uses healthier cooking methods and ingredients.** Look for recipes that call for baking, roasting, broiling, or grilling. Deep frying and pan-frying tend to be higher in fat. When possible, use healthier fats, such as olive oil, canola oil, and avocados in place of butter or stick margarine, and lower fat versions of milk, yogurt, and cheese.

▶ **Saturated + trans fat is less than 10% of calories.** Check the nutrition information per serving to see if the recipe meets this criteria. There may be options to substitute or modify the recipe to lower this amount.



← **The recipe includes lower sodium ingredients.** Many packaged and prepared ingredients, such as sauces, dressings, condiments, cheese, and canned foods, can be higher in sodium. If possible, substitute a lower sodium version. Check the nutrition information per serving to see how it contributes to the suggested maximum level of 2,300 mg sodium per day.





# FOOD SAFETY: PREPARATION

To reduce the risk of food poisoning while preparing food, follow the simple steps below.

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## KEEP A CLEAN CUTTING BOARD

Most types of cutting boards can be washed and put in the dishwasher, but wooden and bamboo boards cannot. (Check the manufacturer's directions for your board.)

Follow these 4 steps to clean your cutting board by hand:

1. Use a clean sponge or dish cloth to wash the cutting board in hot, soapy water.
2. Rinse the board well with clean, hot water.
3. Sanitize the board: Mix 1 tablespoon of bleach with 1 gallon water. Cover the surfaces of the cutting board with the bleach-water mixture and let it sit for several minutes. Rinse the board with clean water.
4. Dry the board in a dish drainer or with a paper towel before using or storing it. Don't dry with a dish towel because it can spread bacteria to the clean cutting board.

## Wash Your Hands Often

Wash your hands before, during, and after food preparation, and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets and pet waste.

- ▶ Wash hands in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds, lathering the backs of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails. Rinse hands well under running water and dry them with a clean towel or air dry them.
- ▶ Wash your hands after you handle raw eggs, meat, poultry, or fish.

## Keep Ready-to-Eat Foods Separate from Raw Meat, Poultry, Seafood, and Eggs

Cross-contamination occurs when juices from raw meats or bacteria from unclean objects accidentally touch cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Here's how to prevent it:

- ▶ Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods such as fruits and salads.
- ▶ Use 2 cuttings boards: 1 only for raw meat, poultry, and seafood and 1 for ready-to-eat foods such as bread, cheese, fruits, and vegetables. To keep track, buy different color boards for different types of foods.
- ▶ Thoroughly wash cutting boards between uses. Refer to **Keep a Clean Cutting Board** for step-by-step tips.
- ▶ Don't use the same utensils, appliances, dishware, or cutting boards to prepare raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs and cooked or ready-to-eat foods unless you thoroughly wash these items in hot, soapy water first.



## IS IT STILL SAFE TO EAT?

Use the chart below to learn how long you can store leftovers or prepared foods in the refrigerator. Never taste food to see if it is still safe to eat—you can get sick from eating just 1 bite of spoiled food. When in doubt, throw it out.

Type of Food	Use Within
Cooked fresh vegetables	3 to 4 days
Cooked pasta	3 to 5 days
Cooked rice	4 to 6 days
Ham, sliced	3 to 4 days
Cooked beef, poultry, fish, or seafood	3 to 4 days
Soups, casseroles, and stews	3 to 4 days
Stuffing	3 to 4 days
Deli counter meat	3 to 5 days
Hot dogs, opened package	7 days

they can stay warm for hours, and placing large containers of hot food directly into the refrigerator can warm the refrigerator to unsafe temperatures (above 40° F). See **Cooling Tips for Large Batches**.

- ▶ Many leftovers and prepared foods stay safe in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days. See the sidebar **Is it Still Safe to Eat?** for information on specific foods.
- ▶ To store leftovers or prepared foods for more than a few days, freeze them in freezer-safe tightly sealed containers. Thaw frozen leftovers in the refrigerator or microwave (never at room temperature).

## Reheating Foods

- ▶ The texture and quality of food decreases each time you reheat it. Reheat only the amount of food you plan to eat right away.
- ▶ When reheating soups, stews, and sauces on the stove, heat them until they boil.
- ▶ Reheat meats and casseroles in the microwave or in an oven set to at least 325° F. Be sure to use microwave-safe or oven-safe dishes.
- ▶ Leftovers reheated in the oven or microwave must reach an internal temperature of 165° F. Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of the food.
- ▶ Stir food frequently when reheating to make sure it heats evenly.
- ▶ Allow microwaved foods to sit for 2 minutes after reheating. This time is necessary to bring the food to a safe internal temperature (165° F).



