



MASTERING YOUR KITCHEN
Cookware and Cutlery
Techniques, Recipes, and More



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WELCOME

TO

WOLF

GOURMET

Since joining Sub-Zero, a third-generation family-owned company, in 2000, Wolf has brought its professional-quality ranges to people like you: passionate home cooks. We know that you can think of no better way to spend a day than preparing a meal for your friends and family. With Wolf Gourmet, we're thrilled to bring our trademark level of workmanship, attention to detail, and sleek design to other parts of your kitchen. Through relentless testing and tweaking by designers and engineers who love to cook as much as you do, we have created a line of knives, cookware, and countertop appliances that will help you cook better and more joyfully than you ever thought possible.

START HERE

Better tools allow you to **put your concentration**
where it belongs: on the food.

High-quality knives and cookware make cooking easier and more fun. Now that you have these tools, we want to help you use them to their full potential. That's where this book comes in. Our goal is to give you the knowledge to put your new knives and cookware to work with even more confidence than you had before.



COOK SMART

Mise en place means to chop and measure. This helps streamline your prep and maximizes the pleasure of making a meal.

The first step to *mise en place* is an easy one: read the recipe prior to cooking it. Recipes are road maps, designed to help you go from a set of disparate ingredients to a stellar, perfectly prepared dish. A great way to learn how ingredients and the cooking method work together is to follow the recipe to the letter the first time you make it. The second time you make the recipe, you can veer from the instructions, making ingredient substitutions and other changes that reflect your preferences and tastes. Since you have already made the recipe once, you'll be able to anticipate how the changes you make will influence the overall dish.

Here are a few more tips that can help you cook smarter, more confidently, and more efficiently.

- 1.** Before you begin, read the recipe all the way through. (It actually doesn't hurt to read it through twice!)
- 2.** *Mise en place* everything you can before you start cooking. Have your ingredients sliced, diced, and portioned before you start cooking to ensure that everything is where you need it, when you need it.
- 3.** Work cleanly. If you have multiple cutting boards, use each of them for a different type of food—for example, cut meats on a dishwasher-safe plastic board, bread and fruit on a wood or cork board, and vegetables on another wood or plastic board. (And if using one cutting board for all your chopping needs, start with the vegetables and end with raw meats so you don't have to wash the board between ingredients.) Always wipe down your cutting board and wash your hands between prep tasks, and wash your board in hot soapy water when you're finished. To remove the toughest odors, give the board a scrub with a lemon half or some distilled white vinegar, then rinse with hot soapy water. Stand the board on its edge and allow it to air-dry between uses. Never return cooked food to a dirty cutting board. When doing dishes, wash your cutting board in an empty sink so you don't contaminate other dishes or dishwasher.
- 4.** Work neatly. If your workspace is cluttered, so is your mind. Stop every once in a while to clear the onion skins, carrot peels, and beef trimmings from your cutting board. (To make this super easy, you can place a bowl just for trimmings at the top of the cutting board.) Wipe down the countertops and clean up any spills as you go. The minute or so it takes to clear the board and reset your workspace will reset your brain as well. If you can wash a couple of dishes while the roast is in the oven and one or two more while the sauce reduces, even better. When you clean as you go, you'll find you have little to do at the end of the meal but wash a wine glass or two.

MAKING THE CUT

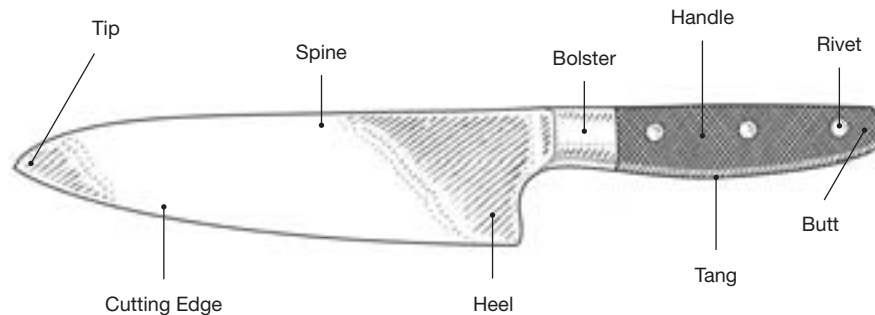
GETTING TO KNOW YOUR KNIVES

With a chef's knife, a paring knife, and a bread knife, you can own the kitchen. **There are few tasks you can't do if you have these three tools.**



The Chef's Knife

For many cooks, the chef's knife is not only the primary knife but also the most essential cooking tool. If you've used one for any amount of time, you know that it's hard to imagine preparing a meal without it. Your chef's knife is suitable for everything, from portioning large cuts of meat to chopping the finest chiffonade of basil.



TIP You'll use the tip to make vertical cuts on an onion and for precision work. It also serves as an anchor, staying on the board when using the rocking cut (see page 17 for technique) and when mincing.

CUTTING EDGE The edge works best when kept as sharp as possible.

HEEL The heel of our knife is weighted to allow better leverage when the tip rests on the cutting board. Because it's balanced, you can chop longer and without your wrist tiring.

BOLSTER The bolster is the junction of the knife where the metal blade transitions to the handle and is where you grip the knife.

SPINE Use the spine to bruise lemongrass, crack lobster claws, or scrape food into piles on your cutting board. (Never scrape food with your blade's sharp edge as this will damage your cutting edge.)

TANG The tang is the section of the blade that's covered by the handle. It gives the knife weight and balance. The blade on these "full tang" knives goes up the length of the handle, making them more durable.

RIVET The rivets hold the handle securely in place.

HANDLE The moisture-resistant pakkawood handle is functional, beautiful, and comfortable to hold.

Paring Knife

A paring knife has a shorter blade than the chef's knife and it's also much narrower. It's best for precise tasks, like hulling strawberries, deveining shrimp, and scoring tomatoes.

Bread Knife

Bread knives are serrated, with sharp, toothy points separated by crescents of sharpened steel. The points provide the bite that keeps the edge from slipping on a crusty loaf of bread while the crescents do most of the cutting. Bread knives are designed to easily slice through the crustiest of loaves. They also do a superb job of slicing melons, salami, and pineapples.

Slicer/Carving Knife

Like the bread knife, the slicing knife is long and slender, making it an especially effective tool for slicing cooked meat. The narrowness of the blade keeps moist food from sticking to it, the length allows a smooth, one-stroke cut, and the sharp tip enables you to sever joints cleanly and easily.

Utility Knife

The utility knife is longer than a paring knife and narrower than a chef's knife. It is the go-to tool for those jobs in the middle, like halving a sandwich or slicing pepperoni. It can also be a more comfortable option than a chef's knife for cooks with small hands.

Santoku

This wide-bladed Japanese utility knife is usually shorter than a chef's knife. The edge is also straighter than the chef's knife, making it good for precise vegetable cuts.

Boning Knife

This is *the* knife for anyone who wants serious control when working with uncooked meat. The long, slim blade can separate meat right off the bone and effortlessly trims off fat and silver skin (the sinewy, tough membranes attached to many roasts). The sharp, tapered point is ideal for cutting through tendons and joints.

Shears

Kitchen scissors are infinitely useful and not just for opening plastic packages. Our shears can do delicate work, like snipping herbs, or tougher jobs, like removing the backbones from chickens. The grippers on the inner handles are excellent for cracking nuts or lobsters and crab shells. Best of all, after all of this dirty work, they come apart for easy cleaning.

DID YOU KNOW?

Besides holding your knives, steel, and kitchen shears, the Wolf Gourmet knife block also has a resting spot for tablets or magazines so you can easily view your recipes as you cook.

Put Your Honing Steel to Work for You

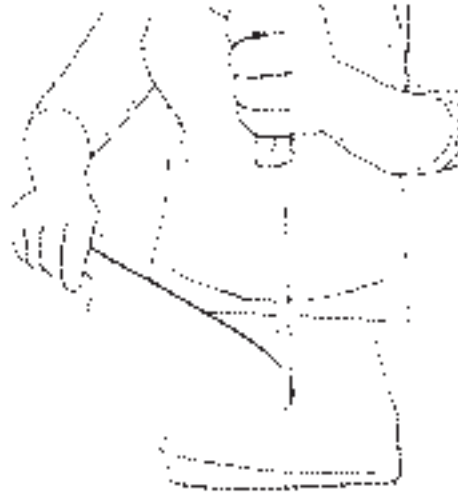
Pulling the knife blade across a honing steel once a week (or more often if you're a heavy-duty cook) will keep the knife edge at peak performance for up to a year between sharpening. As you chop, slice, and dice, the edge of your knife will start to curl (it's not visible to the naked eye—this happens on a microscopic level). The curl is what dulls the blade. To realign the edge, simply follow these steps.



1. KEEP THE STEEL STEADY Place a kitchen towel on your cutting board or countertop to prevent the steel from slipping.

2. HOLD THE STEEL Grasp the steel with your guide hand (see The Guide Hand page 14) and set the tip of the steel on the kitchen towel.

3. FIND THE ANGLE Place the edge of the knife against the honing steel at the manufacturer's recommended angle (12.5 degrees for Wolf Gourmet knives—about the angle at the tip of a large carrot). Touch the steel with the knife's edge as though cutting a very thin slice. Adjust the angle of the knife until you barely feel the edge bite rather than slip down the steel.



4. HONE THE KNIFE Using little more pressure than the weight of the knife itself, glide the knife from the heel to the tip while moving the blade down the steel; keep your wrist locked to maintain the proper angle. Do this five or six times on both sides of the blade, alternating sides each time.

5. REPEAT Do once every week or so for regular maintenance. As your edges wear, you might need to hone more often. When honing stops being effective, it's time to get your knives professionally sharpened.

A FEW WORDS ON KNIFE SAFETY

Our knives are seriously sharp, and that's a good thing.

Sharper knives are safer knives because they glide so easily through food.

Knife safety is mostly common sense. Here are a few tips to keep in mind.

1. STORE KNIVES AWAY Whether you put your knives in our countertop block, hang them on a wall-mounted knife magnet, or hide them in a drawer block, keep knives that are not in use in a safe place, ensuring they're out of reach of curious little hands and paws.

2. WHEN IN USE, KEEP YOUR ATTENTION ON THE KNIVES AND KEEP THE KNIVES ON THE CUTTING BOARD When you need to stop midway through chopping to stir a sauce or grab something from the fridge, swivel your knife so that the sharp edge points away from you and the entire knife rests on the cutting board. Or place the knife off the board entirely, with the sharp edge tucked under the back of the cutting board.

3. CARRY A KNIFE TIP DOWN In restaurant kitchens, you'll sometimes hear chefs say, "Knife behind!" to alert other chefs that they're carrying their blades. Ideally, you won't have to ever walk far with your knives, but even for just a few steps,

carry the knife tip down and at your side, right next to your leg, so that the blade doesn't catch on the corner of a table or countertop.

4. HAND SOMEONE A KNIFE SAFELY Place the knife on the cutting board or countertop so he or she can then safely pick up the knife by the handle.

5. LET FALLING KNIVES FALL It's a natural impulse to try to catch something when it falls. In this case, it's best to step back and let it happen, then pick the knife up after it lands.

6. STABILIZE YOUR CUTTING BOARD Set a wet paper towel or a bit of nonslip shelf liner under your board to keep it in place.

7. REGULARLY CLEAN YOUR CUTTING BOARD Working on a clean, well-organized surface helps you stay focused and safe. Have a couple of bowls or containers near the board for your chopped food and any trimmings.

8. KEEP KNIVES OUT OF THE SINK Always hand wash knives because the heat from the dishwasher will damage the handles, and the edges can be damaged if other objects bang up against them. Keep the knives to the side of the sink until you can wash them individually; as you can imagine, a sink full of soapy water is a dangerous place for a knife to hide.

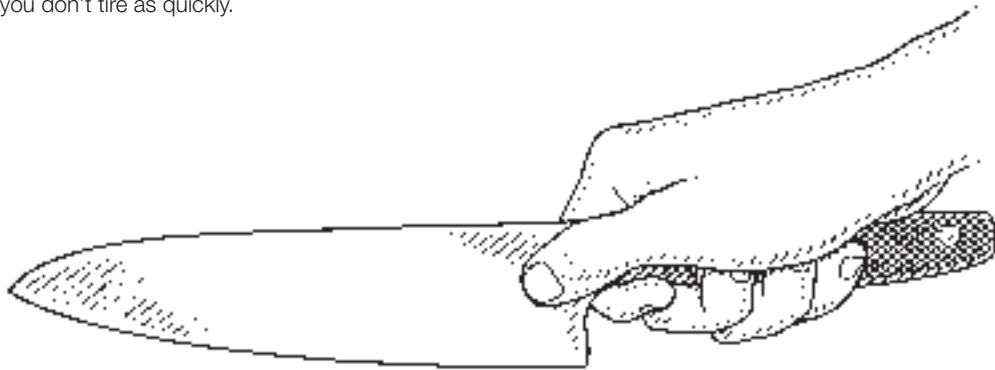
9. KEEP KNIVES SHARP Hone knives regularly to maintain the edges (see Put Your

Honing Steel to Work for You on page 11 to learn more), then have them professionally sharpened about once a year.

10. COVER YOUR KNIVES' EDGES If you're moving or taking your knives with you on vacation, cover the blades with plastic sheaths and pack them so that they won't budge. Better yet, if you travel frequently with your knives, invest in a professional knife roll, which you can find at most kitchen shops.

How to Hold Your Knife: The Pinch Grip

While there are many ways to hold a knife, the most effective grip is what's known as the pinch grip. This grip, which has you hold the knife so your fingers are wrapped around the knife at just ahead of the bolster, gives you more control; it prevents slipping when, for example, a carrot unexpectedly rolls or the blade hits a piece of bone. The grip also aligns the blade of the knife with your wrist and forearm, so you don't tire as quickly.



Try it!

- 1.** Grasp your knife blade just above the heel so it's pinched between your forefinger and thumb.
- 2.** Lay your first finger flat against the blade just ahead of the bolster.
- 3.** Put your thumb so it's on the opposite side of the blade, directly across from the second joint of your index finger.
- 4.** Curl your index finger back slightly to clear the heel of the knife.

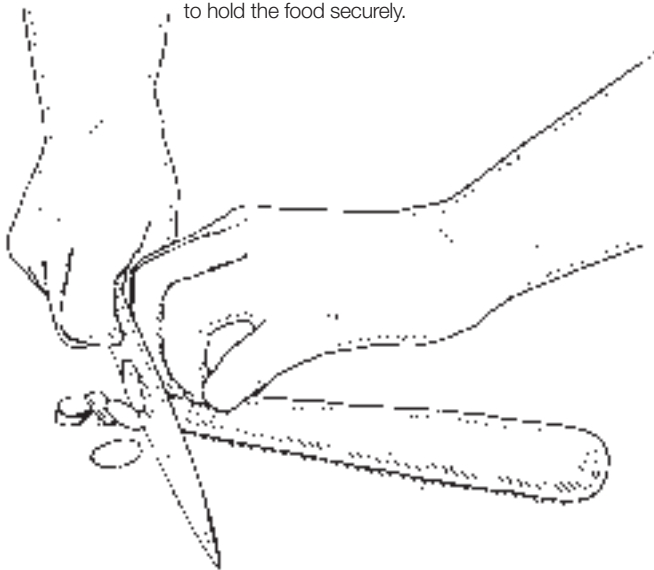
The Guide Hand

If you watch chefs on TV, you'll see that they're often slicing and dicing while looking at the camera. If you look closer, you'll notice that they're almost always chopping with the knife blade up against the knuckles of their other hand. That other hand—known as the guide hand—is actually just as important as the one holding the knife.

Using your guide hand will help you cut food more quickly and safely. When you keep the flat of the knife blade in constant contact with the knuckles of your guide hand's fingers, you know where the edge is and where your fingers are at all times. To get a feel for the motion, practice on the cutting board without trying to cut anything.

Try it!

1. Place the tips of the fingers of your guide hand on the food to be cut. Press down lightly and curl your fingertips under. Make it so the front of your fingers between the first and second joints are straight up and down. Depending on the size of the item you're cutting, you may need to bunch your fingers together or spread them out to hold the food securely.
2. Slide your thumb around behind the wall of your fingers and use it to anchor the food. The flat side of your knife glides up and down on the middle joint of your fingers. At first it will be tempting to let your thumb drift out from behind the safety of your fingers, especially when gripping larger pieces. Take care to keep it in place.
3. As you cut, move your guide hand fingers back along the surface of the food toward your thumb. This motion will let you control the thickness of the slice.
4. When your fingers reach your thumb, pause for a moment to relocate your thumb farther back and start slicing again.



PRO TIP

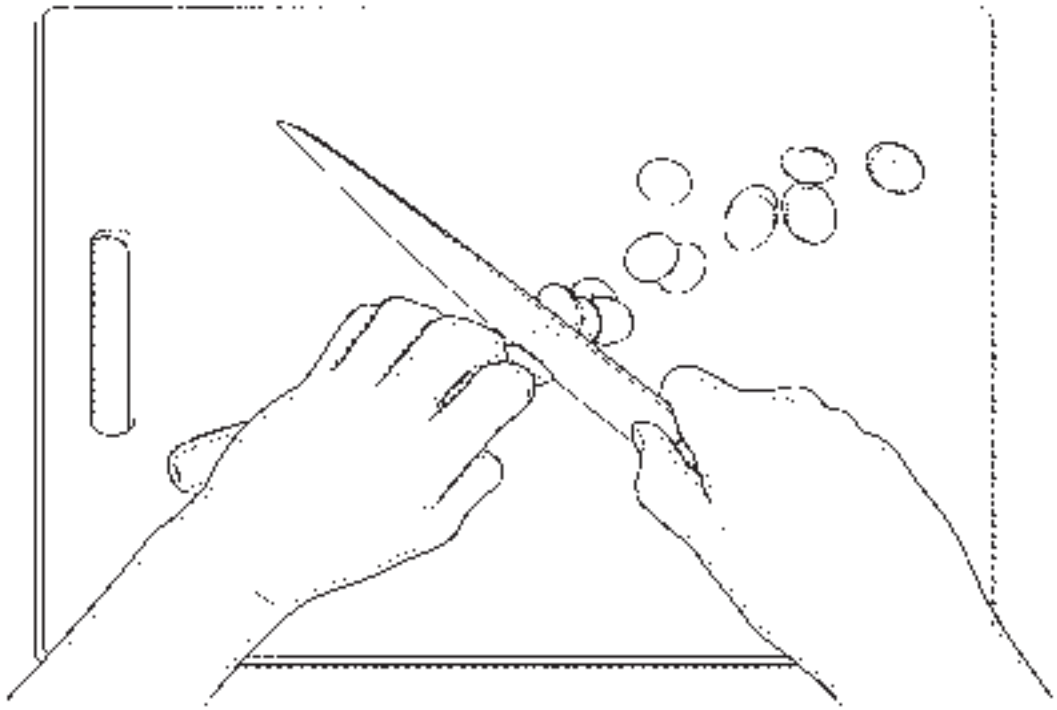
We designed our knife's bolster so it doesn't uncomfortably rub against your fingers or create calluses.

Cutting Board Know-How

If you're just slicing up a few strawberries for a snack, you don't really need a strategy, but if you're chopping a lot of vegetables for a batch of soup, having a consistent workflow will make the prep go much faster.

Stand in front of your cutting board, holding your knife with your guide hand in place. The blade should point to one far corner of the board while the guide hand is facing the other, forming an imaginary X directly in front of you. Place your guide hand on the food, with your fingertips curled under and the knife blade resting on the flats of your knuckles.

When you look straight down, ideally you should see the food that has just been sliced in front of the knife, where the cutting action is happening. If, instead, you are looking at the spine of the knife and the food that has not yet been cut, move your hands over just a little or adjust your stance slightly (without twisting yourself uncomfortably), so you can see your fingers and the work you're doing.



The best direction to work is toward your knife hand. So, if you're right-handed, place uncut food at the top left of the board. Set the bowl for trimmings at the top of the board in the twelve o'clock position and a container (or several) for your beautifully portioned food on the right. Have a clean kitchen or paper towel available for wiping down the board as needed.

To keep your knives in tip-top shape, use a wooden or plastic cutting board. Cutting on surfaces that are even harder than the knives, like granite, ceramic, or glass, will damage the cutting edges and should never be done. If you use your knives almost daily, a large wooden cutting board (at least 16 inches wide) is a great investment.

THE DETAILS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Properly cut meats and vegetables
not only look better, but **uniform cuts cook more evenly.**

As you probably already know, there is more than one way to chop a carrot. A large dice is great for roasting, tiny cubes cut in brunoise style form the foundation for sauces, while julienned matchsticks work beautifully in slaws and quick-cooking sautés. Properly cut meats and vegetables not only look better, but uniform cuts cook more evenly, meaning that all your chopped carrots or julienned zucchini finish cooking at the same time. In this section you'll find lots of tips and insights on slicing and dicing like a pro.

The Rocking Cut and Push Cut

There are two basic techniques to know for cutting food on a cutting board: the rocking cut for flatter or softer items and the push cut for tall or hard items. Eventually, you'll start switching up the techniques intuitively as you work on a single vegetable. For example, you'll use the push cut to break down the head of cabbage and the rocking cut as you shred it. Here are both ways, broken down step by step.

The Rocking Cut

The rocking cut, in which the tip of your knife never leaves the board, is the one you'll use for soft or short items, like scallions, herbs, and vegetables you've already broken down into smaller pieces. With practice, it's an extremely fast technique because the knife never stops moving. In the beginning, your slices may not be entirely uniform, but you'll soon be knocking out mounds of perfect julienne.

- 1. Set up the knife and guide hand:** Place the tip of the knife on the cutting board and the flat of the blade against your guide hand's knuckles.
- 2. Arrange the food:** Have the food on the board, just in front of your knife, with the heel of the knife just a little higher than the food.
- 3. Make the cut:** Rock the knife forward and down to make a slice. Move your guide hand back across the food and rock your knife backward and up. Reset the knife against your guide hand for the next stroke, never letting the tip of the knife leave the board.

Planks, Sticks, and Cubes

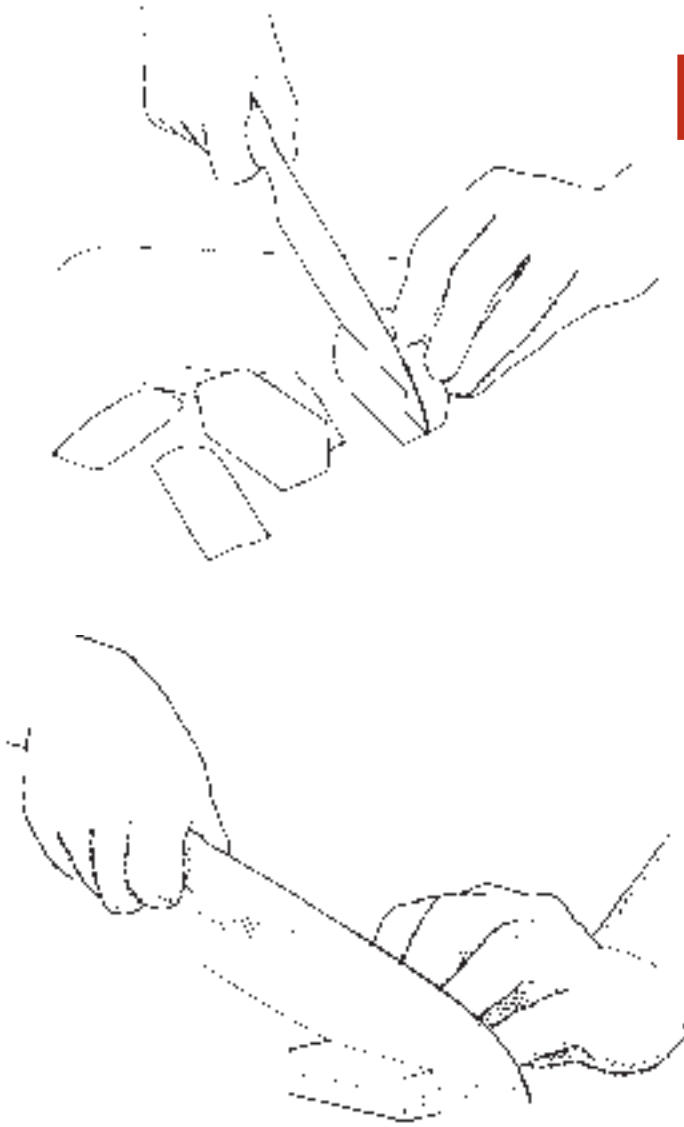
Most recipes call for fruits and vegetables to be cut into uniform shapes and sizes, say, "chopped into ½-inch dice" or "sliced ¼ inch thick." Food that's cut evenly cooks more evenly. (Plus, let's be honest—it looks better!) More formal dishes or classic French recipes might call for specific cuts like julienne, bâtonnet, medium dice, small dice, or brunoise. Each cut has a specific definition and size (see page 19).

The great thing about these cuts is they all start the same way: square off the item you're cutting, create planks, then sticks, then the size of cube you need.

The Push Cut

For larger, firmer items like cabbage, squash, or beets, it's best to use the push cut technique. Push cutting is a little slower than rocking because you stop to reposition the knife each time, but you have more control and can produce more even cuts.

- 1. Arrange the knife on the food:** Start with the front part of the edge of the knife on the vegetable rather than on the board, positioning the cutting edge so it's nearly perpendicular to the board. (The heel of the knife should be raised slightly.)
- 2. Make the first cut:** Slice forward and down. The stroke is similar to the rocking cut but the edge of the knife should stay nearly perpendicular to the board. Even after your knife reaches the cutting board, glide it completely forward to make sure that you have cut all the way through the food.
- 3. Reset the knife:** Move your guide hand back along the food, then reset the knife into the starting position and make another slice.



HOW TO MAKE FRENCH CUTS

Our knives are designed to be as sharp as Japanese knives and as durable as German ones so you can make clean, effortless cuts.

1. Square off the ingredient: Cut the vegetable into as precise a rectangle as you can. This may seem wasteful, but it doesn't have to be. Just do what restaurants do and save your trimmings, including vegetable peels and herb stems, for stocks or salads. (If you're not chopping a lot at once, just freeze the trimmings in a large resealable plastic bag. When the bag is full, it's time to make stock.)

When you're working with vegetables that taper from thick to thin, like carrots or parsnips, cut them into manageable 2- to 3-inch lengths, stand the segments on the wider, flat end, and cut downward, perpendicular to the cutting board, to remove the curved sections.

2. Cut planks: After you have your rectangular pieces, slice them into planks. The size of the final cut you want to make will determine the thickness of the plank. For example, slice thin $\frac{1}{8}$ inch planks for brunoise and julienne and medium-thick $\frac{1}{4}$ inch planks for bâtonnets.

3. Cut sticks: After slicing the planks, the next step is to stack the planks two or three high, then slice them lengthwise into sticks that are the same width as the plank.

4. Cut cubes: Finally, if you want to cut cubes, cut across the sticks—again at the same width as the previous cuts—to produce a dice.

Classic French Cuts

JULIENNE (joo-lee-EHN): Slice $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch planks into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick sticks that are each 2 to 3 inches long

BRUNOISE (broon-WAHZ): Slice julienned strips crosswise into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch cubes

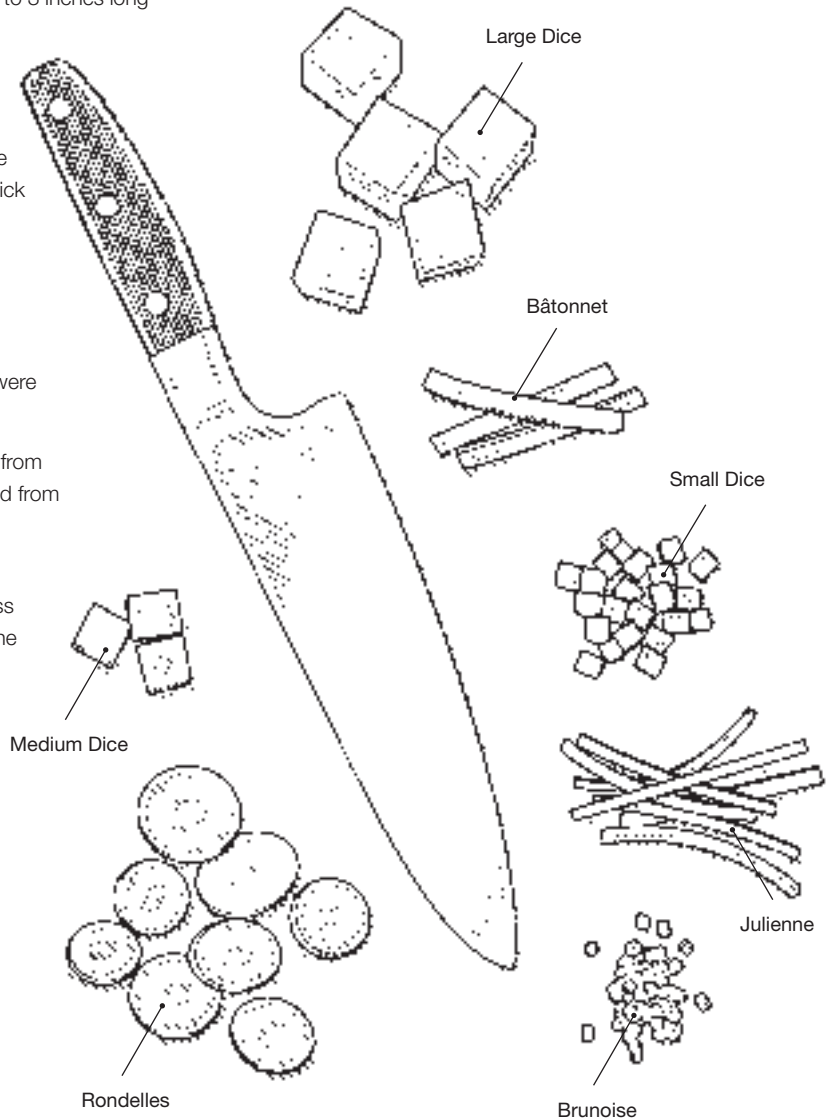
BÂTONNET (bah-tow-NAY): Slice $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick planks into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick sticks that are 2 to 3 inches long

SMALL DICE: Slice bâtonnets crosswise into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch cubes

MEDIUM DICE: $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes, cut from $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick sticks (that were sliced from $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick planks)

LARGE DICE: $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes cut from $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick sticks (that were sliced from $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick planks)

RONDELLES (rahn-DELLZ): Coin-shaped slices of any thickness from any round vegetable. Angle the knife diagonally across the fruit or vegetable (usually about 45 degrees) and cut on the bias to make rondelles.



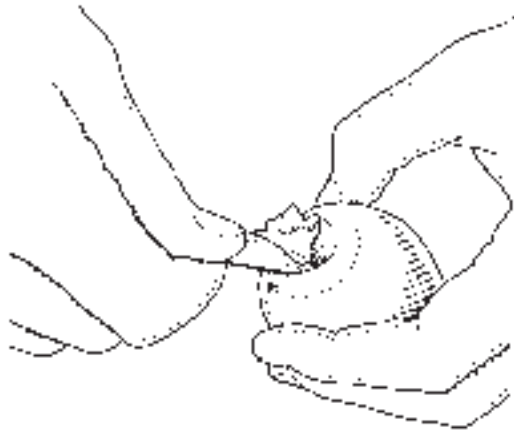
Cutting Tomatoes and Other Fruits

To serve summer's perfect tomatoes, you only need to slice them and sprinkle with salt. When you cook sauces or stews with out-of-season tomatoes, however, the tough skins and watery seeds are usually best removed. The prep takes longer, but the payoff is worth it.

To core

This technique also works for hulling strawberries and removing blemishes from potatoes.

- 1.** Grip the blade of the paring knife near the tip, pinching it between thumb and forefinger. The length of knife you allow to protrude is the depth of your cut.
- 2.** Rotate the tomato around the tip of the knife to remove the core.



To seed

Cut globe tomatoes across the equator; slice plum or Roma-style tomatoes lengthwise. Gently squeeze the tomato halves over a bowl and remove the seeds and liquid with your fingers.

To peel

If you are just dicing a single tomato, peel it with your paring knife or a peeler. Use the following technique to peel a larger quantity of tomatoes. You can also use this technique to peel peaches and plums.

- 1.** Fill a large bowl with ice water and bring a large saucepan of water to a boil.
- 2.** Use the tip of your paring knife to score a small X in the skin at the bottom of each tomato.
- 3.** Use tongs to gently drop two or three tomatoes into the boiling water for about 30 seconds or until the skin splits. Remove the tomatoes from the water with tongs and set aside.
- 4.** When the tomatoes are cool enough to handle, trap the split skin between your thumb and the blade of the paring knife and it should slip right off.

To dice

Lay the cut side of the tomato on the cutting board and cut into strips. Cut across the strips to produce a rough dice called *concassé*. For finer dice, make three or four horizontal cuts, then cut strips and dice them.

How to Prepare Onions, Garlic, and Other Alliums

Alliums, including onions, garlic, leeks, scallions, shallots, and chives, add an incomparable depth of flavor to food and are the starting point for many dishes in many different cuisines. They do have some unusual characteristics to consider when cutting them.

Here are some points to keep in mind.

1. START WITH THE STEM END Onions and shallots have a stem end, where the leaves come together at the top, and a root end, the beard-like area at the bottom. When prepping either, you almost always want to start by cutting off the stem end to make it easier to peel. With onions, you'll then usually stand the onion up on the newly flat

side and slice it in half through the root before peeling. (In addition to removing the peel, take off any papery or leathery outer layers.)

2. CUT CROSSWISE FOR THIN SLICES

If a recipe calls for either of these vegetables thinly sliced, halve the onion or shallot (or leave whole for rings) and cut crosswise so you have thin slices.

3. CHOP LIKE A PRO If you're going for a finer dice on an onion or large shallot, set the palm of your guide hand on top of the halved and peeled onion with your fingers flared. This will keep the onion steady and your fingers out of the way. Make three to five horizontal cuts, drawing the knife smoothly from the flat stem end to the root; stop just before you actually reach the root (so it doesn't fall apart). (If you're working on a small shallot or going for a rougher chop on an onion, you can skip this step.)

Move your hand so it's holding the root end, and using the tip of your knife, make a series of parallel cuts that reach from the root end to the stem end; the wider the space between your slices, the larger your dice will be.

Still holding the root, cut across the onion or shallot to produce a uniform dice. If you need to mince, run the heel of your knife back and forth through the diced onion, leaving the tip on the board, until very finely chopped.

HOW TO PREPARE LEEKS

Leeks grow in sandy soil and can have dirt between the layers. To clean and prepare:

1. Trim and halve: Trim off the root end. Remove the dark green tops and reserve for stock. (You can also thinly slice these to use in sautés but they do have a bit of a chew.) Halve the rest of the leek lengthwise.

2. Remove the grit: Put the halved leek under cold water and clean well, fanning out the leaves so the grit can easily wash away. Alternatively, you can fill a bowl with water and swish the leeks until the leaves are cleaned.

3. Chop. Or not. For a soup or other preparation in which you want the leeks to get very soft, thinly slice the leeks crosswise. You can also leave the halved leeks as is to steam, braise, or grill and serve as a side dish.



JULIENED ZUCCHINI SALAD

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

This salad is a spectacular way to showcase the summer abundance of zucchini.

It is also a lesson in the power of salt to transform a vegetable. Zucchini, like cucumbers and eggplant, is a very wet vegetable. Since raw zucchini can weep moisture, throwing off the balance of the dressing, it's usually best to salt it in advance.

¼ cup chopped walnuts or whole pine nuts
2 medium zucchini (or 1 medium zucchini and 1 medium yellow summer squash), julienned
Kosher salt
2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest plus
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon minced shallot
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 garlic clove, minced
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper
Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for sprinkling

1. Heat a large dry skillet over medium-high heat, add the walnuts, and toast them, shaking the pan often, until they are lightly browned and fragrant. Transfer the nuts to a small plate to cool.
2. Place the zucchini in a colander, sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt, and toss to combine. Set the colander over the sink to let the zucchini drain for 30 minutes.
3. Put the zucchini under cold running water to wash off the excess salt, then turn it out onto a kitchen towel and pat it dry.
4. Whisk together the lemon zest and juice, shallot, mustard, and garlic in a small bowl. Whisking constantly, slowly drizzle in the oil and whisk until the vinaigrette is thick and emulsified. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Place the zucchini in a large bowl and toss with vinaigrette. Sprinkle the toasted nuts and some Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese over the top and serve.

● **VARIATION: ZUCCHINI, TOMATO, AND BASIL SALAD**

Add 1 cup diced fresh tomatoes and ¼ cup fresh basil chiffonade (page 57) and toss with the zucchini and vinaigrette. Replace the Parmigiano-Reggiano with ⅓ cup crumbled feta cheese.

PRO TIP

A vegetable peeler can be used to shave thin ribbons of zucchini for the salad.



MASTER STIR-FRY

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet, sauté pan or wok

Stir-fries give you a lot of knife practice because most of the work happens at the cutting board rather than the stovetop. Have everything prepped before you heat the oil and set out your ingredients in the order that you're going to use them so you won't have to hunt around for the minced garlic when it's time to add it to the pan.

STIR-FRY

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken, sirloin steak tips, peeled and deveined shrimp, or extra-firm tofu, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 tablespoon mirin
1 tablespoon soy sauce
3 tablespoons peanut or vegetable oil
2 large carrots, cut ¼-inch thick on the bias
1 small head broccoli, florets cut into bite-sized pieces, stems peeled and thinly sliced
4 baby bok choy, ribs thinly sliced, leaves roughly chopped
1 small yellow onion, quartered and sliced
¼ pound snow peas, ends and strings removed
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
Cooked rice, for serving
¼ pound bean sprouts

STIR-FRY SAUCE

3 tablespoons mirin or dry sherry
3 tablespoons store-bought or homemade chicken stock (see Basic Chicken Stock page 32) or vegetable broth
2 tablespoons oyster sauce
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon Asian chile paste or Sriracha sauce
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
2 teaspoons minced garlic
½ teaspoon cornstarch
½ teaspoon sugar

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1. Marinate the protein: Toss the chicken (or beef, shrimp, or tofu) with the mirin and soy sauce in a medium bowl.
 2. Make the stir-fry sauce: Meanwhile, whisk together the mirin, chicken stock, oyster sauce, soy sauce, chile paste, sesame oil, garlic, cornstarch, and sugar in another medium bowl.

continued...

3. Make the stir-fry: Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large skillet over high heat until shimmering and wisps of smoke rise from the oil. Add half of the protein and cook, stirring often, until lightly browned, about 2 minutes, then transfer to a plate. Repeat with the remaining protein.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of the oil to the pan and, once it shimmers, add the carrots, broccoli, and ¼ cup water. Cover and cook until the broccoli is bright green, about 1 minute. Uncover and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute.
5. Using a spatula, push the carrots and broccoli to the edge of the pan. Add the bok choy ribs and the onion to the center of the pan and cook, stirring often, for 1 to 2 minutes.
6. Push the bok choy ribs and the onion to the edge of the pan. Add the bok choy leaves and snow peas to the center of the pan and cook, stirring often, for 1 minute.
7. Push the bok choy leaves and snow peas to the edge of the pan. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the garlic, and ginger to the center of the pan and cook until fragrant, 30 to 45 seconds. Stir the garlic and ginger into the vegetable mixture until combined.
8. Return the protein to the pan and toss to combine. Pour the sauce around the edge of the pan and toss to combine. Serve over rice and sprinkled with bean sprouts.

PRO TIP

By cutting vegetables on the bias, you expose more surface area to the heat so it cooks faster.

7 STEPS TO STIR-FRYING

Stir-fries are infinitely variable. The key is to cut the ingredients into bite-sized pieces and cook them in the proper order so everything finishes at the same time.

1. Sear the protein. Get a good sear on your protein first, then transfer it to a plate. Stir-fries generally call for small pieces of beef, chicken, or pork, which can overcook if you keep them in the pan while cooking the vegetables.

2. Steam the hard vegetables. Hard vegetables like carrots and broccoli take the longest time to cook and can benefit from a quick steam. Add them to the pan along with a little liquid, cover, and cook until barely tender.

3. Add your tender vegetables. Snow peas, bell peppers, and leafy greens only need a minute or so to cook, so add them when the hard vegetables are just tender.

4. Toss in your aromatics. Minced garlic and ginger tend to take on a bitter flavor if cooked too long at high heat, so wait to add them until soon before you add the sauce.

5. Return the protein to the pan. Stir the browned beef, chicken, or pork back into the stir-fry and toss with the other ingredients.

6. Add the stir-fry sauce. Drizzle the sauce around the edge of the pan, then stir everything together until all of the ingredients are coated in the sauce. If the sauce has cornstarch, it will thicken almost as soon as you add it.

7. Serve. A sprinkle of fresh thinly sliced scallions, coarsely chopped cilantro, bean sprouts, chopped peanuts, or a squeeze of lime juice is a nice finishing touch.

GLAZED CARROTS WITH GARLIC AND GINGER

Serves 4 to 6

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

These carrots are delicious with steak or any beef dish, thanks to the zip of the ginger.

If you have access to a farmers' market, look for multicolored carrots, which make this dish especially beautiful.

1 pound carrots, peeled and cut on the bias into ¼-inch slices
½ teaspoon kosher salt, plus extra if needed
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into small bits, or 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon honey

1 tablespoon minced garlic
2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
Freshly ground black pepper
½ teaspoon finely grated lime zest (optional), plus lime wedges, for serving
2 teaspoons chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

1. Place the carrots in a skillet just big enough to hold them. Sprinkle with the salt and add just enough water to cover the bottom of the pan. Add the butter, honey, garlic, and ginger.
2. Set the skillet over medium-high heat, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the carrots just barely begin to soften, 5 to 6 minutes. Remove the cover and continue to cook, stirring often, until the water mostly evaporates and the carrots are shiny and just beginning to brown.
3. Turn off the heat and season with salt and pepper. Squeeze the lime juice over the carrots and sprinkle with lime zest and cilantro, if desired. Serve with lime wedges.

PRO TIP

If you don't have a ruler handy to measure your cuts, you can use the spine of your chef's knife as a guide. Just above the heel (where you grip the knife, see *How to Hold Your Knife: The Pinch Grip* page 13), the spine is about ⅛-inch (3 mm) thick.



NAPA CABBAGE SALAD

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife

This fresh and vibrant cabbage salad was loosely inspired by the Vietnamese banh mi sandwich, which always includes crunchy, tangy vegetables, some heat from a chile, and the pop of fresh herbs.

DRESSING

¼ cup tahini (sesame paste)
2 tablespoons rice vinegar (or 1 tablespoon rice vinegar, plus 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice)
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon honey or agave syrup
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
2 teaspoons Asian chile paste or ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
2 teaspoons white miso paste

SLAW

1 head napa cabbage, shredded (3 to 4 cups)
1 cup shredded red cabbage
2 carrots, peeled and julienned
1 cucumber, peeled and cut into ¼-inch slices
1 red bell pepper, julienned
1 cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro leaves
½ cup roughly chopped roasted peanuts

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1. Make the dressing: Using a whisk or a blender, combine the tahini, rice vinegar, soy sauce, honey, ginger, chile paste, oil, and miso paste. Drizzle up to ¼ cup water into the dressing and whisk or blend until it reaches your desired consistency.
 2. Make the slaw: In a large salad bowl, toss together the cabbages, carrots, cucumber, bell pepper, and cilantro. Drizzle the dressing over the top and toss to combine, then sprinkle the peanuts over the top and serve.

● VARIATION: CHICKEN SANDWICH

Follow the recipe for making the dressing, but add extra tahini—or use less water—for a more spreadable consistency. Prepare the salad ingredients and toss together in a bowl. Slice a baguette in half lengthwise and toast until warm. Spread the dressing on the cut sides of the baguette. Place a generous amount of roasted or grilled chicken on the bottom half of the baguette and top with the undressed salad. Cover, slice across into quarters, and serve.

YELLOW RICE WITH SOFRITO

Serves 8

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; paring knife; Dutch oven

Sofrito is a mix of chopped vegetables and herbs that is often used in Spanish, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Latin American dishes. Each culture (and probably every family) makes its sofrito slightly differently. All start with finely chopped onions and peppers; most include garlic. Some, like this one, include tomatoes. There are infinite variations, so feel free to experiment. This recipe makes more sofrito than you need for the yellow rice here, but it's a great thing to add to soups, stews, or other rice dishes. The rice will stay hot for a long time, so you have plenty of time to get the rest of your meal together. Store the extra sofrito in the refrigerator or freezer so you have it handy anytime you need an extra boost of flavor.



SOFRITO

- 4 large Cubanelle peppers (or poblano peppers or green bell peppers), seeded and minced
- 4 plum tomatoes, seeded and minced
- 2 yellow onions, minced
- 1 head garlic, minced
- 1 large bunch fresh cilantro, very finely chopped

YELLOW RICE

- 1 to 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups long-grain or medium-grain white rice, rinsed well
- ¼ cup chopped pimiento-stuffed olives
- 1 tablespoon brine-packed capers, rinsed
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon sweet paprika
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus extra if needed
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 cups chicken stock (see Basic Chicken Stock page 32) or water

1. Make the sofrito: Stir together the peppers, tomatoes, onions, garlic, and cilantro in a large bowl. Set ½ cup aside. Transfer the remaining sofrito to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 1 week, or divide into ½-cup portions, store in resealable plastic freezer bags, and freeze for up to 3 months.
2. Make the yellow rice: Heat enough oil to cover the bottom of a Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the ½ cup reserved sofrito and cook, stirring often, until most of the liquid from the vegetables has evaporated. Add the rice, stirring to coat with the sofrito, and cook until the rice smells nutty and is slightly translucent, about 1 minute. Stir in the olives, capers, cumin, paprika, turmeric, bay leaf, salt, and pepper to taste. Add the chicken stock and bring to a boil.
3. When the rice mixture boils, stir once to ensure that no rice is sticking to the bottom of the pan. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 20 minutes without removing the lid. Turn off the heat and let the rice steam for 10 to 15 minutes more. Fluff with a fork and remove bay leaf before serving.

PRO TIP: ANNATTO OIL

Yellow rice is traditionally made with annatto oil, made from annatto seeds (also called achiote seeds). These are small, deep-red seeds that can be used as a ground spice or soaked in warm oil to produce a vibrantly colored, lightly flavored oil. If you have access to annatto, use it in place of the paprika and turmeric.

BASIC CHICKEN STOCK

Makes 1 quart

Equipment: Chef's knife; Dutch oven or stock pot

The next time you roast a chicken, set aside a moment or two after dinner to remove the meat from the carcass so you can save the bones for stock. If you don't have time after dinner to simmer the stock, you can simply freeze the carcass in a resealable plastic bag until you're ready (along with vegetable trimmings, like parsley stems and onion scraps). This recipe can easily be doubled or tripled depending on the number of chicken (or Thanksgiving turkey) carcasses you have stashed in the freezer.

Bones and carcass from 1 roast chicken
2 yellow onions, quartered
2 carrots, roughly chopped
2 ribs celery, roughly chopped

2 dried bay leaves
1 teaspoon roughly cracked
black peppercorns

1. Place the chicken bones and carcass in a Dutch oven or stock pot, breaking apart the carcass if necessary to fit. Add enough cold water to cover by 1 inch, then add the onions, carrots, celery, bay leaves, and peppercorns.
2. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, skimming off any foam that rises to the surface of the pot. (Don't let the water boil—it will make the stock cloudy.) Move the pot to a back burner if you prefer, partially cover, lower the heat to medium-low, and gently simmer for 4 hours.
3. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh sieve or a colander lined with cheesecloth set over a large bowl. Let the stock cool, then transfer to

an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 1 week, or transfer to resealable plastic freezer bags and freeze for up to 6 months.

PRO TIP

If you are making soup or stew or simply cutting vegetables for a rustic side dish, you don't necessarily have to square off vegetables for precision cuts. As long as the pieces are roughly the same size you'll be fine. This is true for carrots, celery, and onions or anything else that will eventually be pureed or strained out of the final dish. The rule of thumb: Chop into larger pieces for longer cooking and smaller pieces for shorter cooking times.



COOKING LIKE A PRO

WHAT'S IN YOUR COOKWARE SET

Much like our cutlery, we designed our cookware with **maximum functionality** and comfort in mind.

If a good cook can create spectacular meals using any old pots and pans, imagine what he or she could do with truly exceptional cookware. Much like our cutlery, our cookware is designed with maximum functionality and comfort in mind. In the following pages, we'll introduce you to each pan and explain the differences among them. Then we'll explore the most common techniques that use these outstanding pans so you can practice cooking in them.

SKILLET A skillet, also known as a frying pan, is one of the most versatile pans. The wide cooking area makes it great for searing steaks and chops. And if you're going to make a pan sauce afterward, it's even better—the pan's low, flared walls encourage fast evaporation when reducing liquids. Strangely enough, the skillet—instead of the sauté pan—is also usually the pan of choice for quick sautés and stir-fries if you don't have a wok. Why? A spatula is easier to maneuver in a skillet than in a sauté pan, and the pan's flared walls and lighter weight make it better for shaking and flipping food like a chef. You'll also reach for your skillet when toasting nuts or seeds, cooking bacon, and pan-roasting chicken.

SAUTÉ PAN With its straight sides, a sauté pan tends to have about 30 percent more cooking area than the same-sized skillet, making it a terrific tool for searing a large roast before putting it in the oven or pan-roasting more steaks or chops than you can fit in your skillet. Those sides also contain liquid (including oil) better than a skillet, so a sauté pan is great for shallow frying too. Because it usually comes with a lid, a sauté pan also works well when you're cooking down greens and making some meat or vegetable braises.

SAUCEPAN True to its name, the saucepan is one of your choices for preparing sauces, but it does so much more. It is the pan to grab when making grains or beans, hot chocolate, boiled or steamed vegetables, risotto, and smaller batches of soup. Basically, the saucepan is your tool for anything that contains a good bit of liquid.

While you want to reserve most sautéing for your skillet, you can certainly sweat or sauté vegetables (see *Sweating vs. Sautéing* page 37) right in the saucepan when you're starting a soup, pilaf, or

similar dish. Just be sure not to overcrowd the pan, because then the vegetables will be steamed rather than sautéed.

SAUCIER The saucier, more formally known as a sauteuse évasée or Windsor pan, is very similar to a saucepan. The gently curved sides and bowl shape, however, make it even easier to scrape down the sides of the pan with a whisk.

The flared sides also encourage more evaporation than the straight-sided saucepan, so stocks and sauces reduce faster.

DUTCH OVEN The Dutch oven (sometimes called a casserole) is a short, wide, heavy-duty pot. It's the ideal pot for large braises and stews as well as larger batches of grains or beans. When braising, you can sear the meat right in the pan on the stovetop, sauté your vegetables, then add your liquid, and transfer it to the oven for long, slow cooking. An ovenproof lid makes the transition smooth and easy.

The Dutch oven is also the pot to use for deep frying. When cold foods are dropped into hot oil, there's a risk that the oil temperature will drop too much, resulting in a soggy crust. The walls of the Dutch oven retain the heat so the oil recovers quickly and your fried food is crisp.

STOCKPOT Ranging from 6 quarts to 32 quarts (or even larger in restaurant kitchens), stockpots are designed to hold large amounts of liquid for long, slow cooking. Like the Dutch oven, the stockpot has wide handles on the sides for easy lifting. The most useful size of stockpot for most home cooks is 8 to 12 quarts (the Wolf Gourmet stockpot is 8 quarts) because it's small enough to store in a kitchen cabinet yet large enough to make several batches of soup or stock for the freezer.

SAUTÉING

FAST-MOVING AND FLAVORFUL

You can sauté food in a number of different pans, but when you're **making a dish that's purely a sauté**, you'll usually want to **reach for a skillet**.

The key to sautéing is to cook food for a short time, moving it constantly, over relatively high heat. It's the best technique for ingredients that are cut into bite-sized pieces, like vegetables and quick-cooking proteins, such as shrimp or chicken breast.

If you want to cook larger pieces of meat or fish, they are better when they're pan-seared and finished in the oven, a technique known as pan roasting. We'll cover that in the next chapter.

Secrets to Successful Sautéing

1. PREPARE THE FOOD Pat the meat, fish, or vegetables dry with paper towels; wet food causes the oil to spatter and steam to release, which cools the pan and inhibits browning. In some instances, a very light dusting of flour will help keep the food dry, create a delicious browned crust, and add to the body of a pan sauce. Season proteins with salt and pepper before pan searing (and before coating in flour, if using).

2. PREHEAT THE OIL Because the pans are so efficient at conducting heat, they won't need more than a minute or two to become hot enough for cooking. Pour in just enough oil so that it covers the bottom of the pan. When the oil shimmers (you'll see visible waves or striations in the oil), you're ready to cook.

3. ADD THE FOOD When you're sautéing, don't overcrowd the pan, because too much food in a skillet will cause the ingredients to steam instead of brown. If it looks like your food won't fit in a single layer, it's usually best to find a bigger pan or to cook the food in batches. When you want to achieve deep browning, you need to be even more vigilant and add the pieces so they don't touch—at least for the first few minutes of cooking.

4. COOK THE FOOD If you're searing, wait until the protein is nicely browned before flipping it; the crust will help the pieces release easily from the pan when you use tongs to flip them. When you're sautéing vegetables or proteins that don't require such intense browning, like the shrimp in the Shrimp Scampi (see recipe page 38), you can stir and flip them constantly, then pull them off the heat when they're browned and cooked to your liking. Pay particular attention to aromatics like onions and garlic. They can go from properly softened to burned and bitter very quickly when you're working over high heat.

SWEATING VS. SAUTÉING

Sweating is similar to sautéing because you're cooking vegetables in a small amount of fat. The goal with sweating, however, is to soften the vegetables over low to medium heat to avoid browning. Unlike sautéing, when sweating vegetables you may want to encourage a little steam, so cover the pan between stirring to cook the vegetables in their own juices.

THE CHEF'S FLIP

The word *sauté* comes from the French verb *sauter*, which means “to jump.” Food jumps naturally in hot oil, but instead of stirring with a spatula, you can make food jump higher by flipping it around the way you see chefs do on TV.

Flipping food actually has some practical benefits too—it turns the food and redistributes it so that pieces cook evenly.

1. Use a skillet. The sloped sides will help push the food up and back into the pan.

2. Practice with dry food. When first trying to flip food, grab a handful of uncooked rice, beans, or even breakfast cereal—you want something light and easy to sweep up if pieces fall on the floor.

3. Keep the pan close to the burner.

Flipping food is more of a back and forth motion than an up and down one.

4. Get the food to the front of the pan.

Slide the pan forward (about half the length of the burner) and raise your elbow slightly, pulling the pan up and pushing the food to the front edge of the pan.

5. And flip! Give the pan a quick flick backward, lowering your elbow and snapping your wrist a little to get the food moving up and back. Repeat frequently.

SHRIMP SCAMPI

Serves 4

Equipment: Paring knife; chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

This garlicky, lemony shrimp dish is a classic best served with plenty of crusty bread to sop up the sauce. The cooking process moves as quickly as a stir-fry, so you'll want to have all your ingredients prepared in advance and ready to go.

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound (21 to 25 count) shrimp, peeled
and deveined
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 large plum tomatoes, peeled, seeded,
and diced
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons vermouth or dry white wine
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into
4 pieces
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat until it shimmers, 1 to 2 minutes, then add the shrimp. Cook, stirring often, until the shrimp start to curl and turn pink, 1 to 1½ minutes.
2. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then add the tomatoes and cook for 30 seconds more. Turn off the heat and stir in the lemon juice and vermouth. Add the butter, stirring it into the sauce until it melts. Stir in 1 tablespoon of the parsley and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the remaining 1 tablespoon of parsley over the top and serve.





GREEN BEANS WITH LEMON, GARLIC, AND PINE NUTS

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large saucepan; large skillet or sauté pan

Sautéing vegetables in butter adds richness and depth of flavor to a simple side dish. If you prefer, substitute pecans, walnuts, or almonds for the pine nuts. While toasting the nuts isn't necessary, it does bring out their flavor.

1 pound green beans, trimmed
Kosher salt
¼ cup pine nuts
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon peanut oil

2 garlic cloves, minced
½ lemon
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (optional)
Red pepper flakes (optional)

1. Fill a large bowl with ice water and set aside. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil, add the green beans and a few generous pinches of salt, and blanch the green beans until their color brightens, 30 to 60 seconds.
2. Drain the green beans in a colander, then plunge them into the ice water to stop the cooking. Drain again and set aside on a paper towel-lined plate to dry.
3. Place a large skillet over medium heat, add the pine nuts, and toast them, shaking the pan often, until they are lightly browned and fragrant. Transfer the pine nuts to a small plate to cool.
4. Add the butter and oil to the skillet and reduce the heat to medium-low. Once the butter is melted, add the blanched green beans. Season with salt and cook, stirring often, until the green beans begin to brown in spots, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds (don't let the garlic brown). Turn off the heat and squeeze the lemon over the beans.
5. Transfer the green beans to a platter and serve sprinkled with toasted pine nuts, cheese, and red pepper flakes (if desired).

PRO TIP

Restaurant chefs love to blanch vegetables in advance, because they can be sautéed quickly before serving. The technique also works well at home, especially for dinner parties, because having parcooked vegetables handy allows you to get them to the table faster, giving you more time with your guests. If you decide to blanch vegetables, don't skip shocking them in ice water, as it sets the green color and stops them from overcooking. Pat dry with clean towels before sautéing so they take on a nice sear. Blanched vegetables can be refrigerated for up to 2 days before finishing them in a skillet.

PAN SEARING & PAN ROASTING

GOLDEN-BROWN DELICIOUS

Pan searing is often combined with pan roasting, a popular restaurant technique in which you brown both sides of a protein on the stovetop, and then transfer it to the oven to finish cooking.

Pan searing is similar to sautéing: Protein is added to a hot skillet or sauté pan and cooked in a small amount of oil until the surface is seared and browned. The method is best for larger pieces of meat or thicker fish fillets because they need to stay in place to get good browning on the exterior. Pan-seared meats, seafood, and vegetables also develop fond (the French word for “foundation”), the lovely browned bits stuck to the bottom of the pan that become the basis for spectacular sauces. Pan searing is often combined with pan roasting, a popular restaurant technique in which you brown both sides of a protein like a steak, pork chop, or chicken breast on the stovetop, and then transfer it to the oven to finish cooking.

Secrets to Successful Pan Roasting

1. PREHEAT THE PAN AND OVEN Preheat the oven to 350°F to 400°F. (Use the lower temperature for larger cuts of meat, so they cook through without overbrowning, and fish, which can dry out in mere minutes. The higher temperature is great for steaks, chops, and bone-in chicken pieces.)

2. MEANWHILE, PREPARE THE FOOD Pat the pieces of food—usually meat or fish—dry with paper towels; wet food causes steam to release, which cools the pan and inhibits browning. In some instances, a very light dusting of flour will help keep the food dry, creating a delicious browned crust, and add to the body of a pan sauce. Season food with salt and pepper before pan roasting.

3. ADD THE OIL Add just enough oil to the pan so that it covers the bottom and set it over medium heat. When the oil shimmers, add the food in a single layer, being sure to leave a little bit of space between pieces.

4. LET IT COOK For the first few minutes, don't move the food at all. (This can be the toughest part.) The food needs to form a browned crust, which gives it tons of flavor and helps it release from the pan. When the food is browned on one side, flip it, and transfer the pan to the hot oven to finish cooking. (Thin fish fillets or pounded cutlets are best finished on the stovetop.)

5. LET IT REST (USUALLY) Use a potholder or kitchen towel to grab the handle as you pull the pan out of the oven. Fish is ready to serve right away, but other proteins need to rest for a few minutes so the juices can be redistributed throughout the meat. Just transfer the meat to a work surface, then, if you like, use the resting time to make a pan sauce.



SCALLOPS WITH GARLIC-PARSLEY BUTTER

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife; large skillet or sauté pan

The telltale sign of a beautifully cooked scallop? A gorgeous golden-brown exterior with a nearly opalescent, medium-rare center. The key to attaining perfectly seared scallops is using a high-quality pan and dry-packed scallops, which get a much better sear than those that have been preserved in liquid.

1½ pounds large scallops (about 16),
preferably dry-packed
Kosher salt
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 lemon, cut into wedges

1. Use paper towels to pat the scallops dry. Remove any connective tissues and season with salt. Heat the oil in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat until it shimmers, 1 to 2 minutes, then add half of the scallops.
2. Sear the scallops without moving them until nicely browned and they easily release from the pan, about 2 minutes. Use tongs or a spatula to flip the scallops and cook the other side, just long enough to warm the scallop through, 1½ to 2 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and repeat.
3. Use tongs and paper towels to wipe the pan, then reduce the heat to medium and add the butter. Once melted, add the parsley and garlic and cook, stirring, until the garlic is fragrant, 15 to 30 seconds. Transfer the scallops to a platter, pour the garlic-parsley butter over the scallops, and serve with lemon wedges.

● VARIATION: CHILE-LIME BUTTER

Sear the scallops as instructed. Substitute 1 tablespoon Asian chile-garlic sauce and 2 teaspoons finely grated lime zest for the garlic and parsley. Substitute lime wedges for lemon wedges. Serve sprinkled with 2 tablespoons thinly sliced scallions.

PRO TIP

To ensure the scallops cook evenly, place them, one at a time, in the pan starting at the 12 o'clock position. Then add more scallops to the pan in a clockwise direction, being sure not to overcrowd them. After the first scallop has the proper sear, flip each scallop in the same order that you placed them in the pan, and once they are cooked, remove them from the pan in the same order.

PAN-ROASTED STEAK WITH GORGONZOLA-SHALLOT BUTTER

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

A combination of pan searing and pan roasting allows you to cook a steak with a beautifully browned crust and a pink, juicy interior. For a more formal restaurant-style presentation (or for storage), place the butter on a sheet of plastic wrap and roll into a cylinder, twisting the ends. Refrigerate or freeze for at least 30 minutes, then slice into rounds.

GORGONZOLA-SHALLOT BUTTER

1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, softened
2 ounces (about ½ cup) crumbled Gorgonzola cheese
2 tablespoons minced shallot
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

STEAK

4 boneless rib-eye or strip steaks, 1¼ inches thick (8 to 10 ounces each)
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon peanut oil or canola oil
Chopped fresh herbs, for serving

-
1. Make the butter: Place the butter in a bowl and beat with a fork until it starts to become light and airy. Add the cheese, shallot, garlic, and parsley. Season with salt and pepper to taste and mix to combine. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
 2. Make the steak: Pat the steaks dry with paper towels and liberally season both sides with salt and pepper. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed oven-safe skillet or sauté pan over medium heat until it shimmers and just barely begins to smoke. Add the steaks, working in batches if necessary. Sear the steaks without moving them until a golden-brown crust forms, 1 to 1½ minutes. Flip the steaks and sear on the other side for 1 minute, then transfer the pan to the oven.
 3. After 5 minutes, insert an instant-read thermometer into the steaks to check for doneness. Continue cooking until the desired doneness: 120°F for rare, between 120°F and 125°F for medium-rare, and 130°F to 135°F for medium. Use a potholder to hold the pan handle. Remove the steaks from the oven and transfer to a large platter or cutting board with a juice groove. Top each steak with some Gorgonzola butter and let rest for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with herbs and serve.



How to Make a Restaurant-Style Pan Sauce

A glossy pan sauce turns an everyday chicken breast into a restaurant-worthy plate, and thankfully, pan sauces are simple to master. Not only are they made in the same pan used to pan-roast your centerpiece ingredient, but they can also be quickly made while it rests. You'll be able to make a lot of different versions of this easy sauce in mere minutes, giving your chicken breasts, steaks, and fish fillets a whole new flavor profile every time.

After pan-roasting the protein and setting it aside to rest:

1. SAUTÉ YOUR AROMATICS Spoon off most of the fat left in the skillet, then return the pan to the burner. Add minced shallots or other finely chopped aromatics (such as garlic, leeks, onions, or scallions) to the pan and cook until softened, about 1 minute.

2. DEGLAZE THE PAN Add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of red or white wine or another acidic liquid (vermouth and hard cider both work well). It will bubble like crazy. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up all of those flavorful browned bits in the pan, then cook until the liquid is reduced by half to allow the alcohol to evaporate.

3. ADD SOME STOCK Add at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of beef or chicken stock and any sturdy herbs, like rosemary or thyme. Cook until the liquid is reduced by half or more; it should be somewhat thick.

4. SWIRL IN COLD BUTTER Pull the pan off the heat and add at least one tablespoon of cold butter. To make sure your sauce is thick and glossy, you need to create an emulsion. Swirl or whisk in the butter, returning the pan briefly to the heat if necessary to help it melt. If you want to thicken and enrich the sauce even more, add more butter, one tablespoon at a time, letting it melt and emulsify between each addition; this gradual process of adding the butter is called mounting.

5. SEASON THE SAUCE You can strain the shallots and aromatics out of the sauce if you like but you don't have to. Then add any tender herbs, like basil, parsley, or tarragon, and finally, taste your sauce. Season with salt and pepper, then spoon over your centerpiece ingredient.

All About Garlic

Garlic is a must-have in a lot of dishes around the world. Here are a few tips and tricks for peeling, chopping, and using garlic.

Peeling Garlic

1. WITH YOUR CHEF'S KNIFE If you're going to mince a clove or two of garlic or make a paste, you can set the clove on a cutting board, lay the blade of your chef's knife flat against it, and press down with the heel of your hand to crush the garlic and pop the skin loose.

2. SHAKING CLOVES IN A BOWL If you need to peel a lot of garlic at once, separate the cloves and transfer them to a small bowl. Cover the bowl with a plate or cutting board and shake vigorously. The cloves should pop out of the skins.

DID YOU KNOW?

The wide blade makes a chef's knife ideal for smashing garlic, and the length of the knife is perfect for smoothly shredding cabbage, dicing onions, thinly slicing vegetables, or slashing bread dough.

Using Garlic

1. FOR A MILD FLAVOR Thinly slice garlic for the mildest flavor. Use the rocking cut and your guide hand to make even slices of garlic that are about 1/8 inch thick.

2. FOR A MEDIUM TO HEARTY FLAVOR If a recipe calls for chopped or minced garlic, start by making a series of even lengthwise slices through the clove and then cut across to get a rough dice. Then run the heel of your knife back and forth through the garlic, leaving the tip on the board, until very finely chopped. The finer your chop or mince, the stronger the garlic flavor in the final dish.

3. FOR THE STRONGEST GARLIC

TASTE Garlic paste simply dissolves into sauces, soups, and marinades, yielding the heartiest garlic flavor. After you've minced the garlic, sprinkle salt over it. Scrape the garlic on the cutting board with the flat part of your chef's knife, pulling the spine of the knife toward you. Continue pressing and scraping until a thick paste forms.

CHICKEN AND PROSCIUTTO ROULADE

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

Chicken roulade is a classic dinner-party dish that starts off on the stovetop and then finishes in the oven. It's a stunning main course and frees up your burners for making last-minute sauces and side dishes.

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
4 large slices prosciutto

16 to 24 leaves baby spinach
16 sun-dried tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1. Butterfly the chicken breasts: Set the chicken on a cutting board. Place your knife parallel to the cutting board and slice the chicken breasts in half almost all the way through the center, leaving them connected at 1 side.
2. Set 2 large pieces of plastic wrap on your work surface and lightly mist them with water. Place 1 butterflied chicken breast on top of 1 piece of plastic wrap and cover with the second sheet of plastic wrap, moistened side down. Using a meat mallet, pound the chicken until it's ¼ inch thick. Repeat with the remaining chicken breasts. Discard the plastic wrap.
3. Season the breasts with salt and pepper. Lay 1 piece of prosciutto on top of each breast, followed by 4 to 6 spinach leaves and one-quarter of the sun-dried tomatoes. Tuck the ends of each chicken breast in, then roll it into a tight cylinder and tie with kitchen twine (or use toothpicks to fasten the breast shut).
4. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Heat the butter and oil in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken roulades and brown on all sides, about 8 minutes. Transfer to the oven and roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the chicken reads 160°F to 165°F, about 10 minutes (be sure to take the temperature of the meat and not the filling). Transfer the chicken to a plate and let rest for 10 minutes. Remove the twine. Slice into 4 or 5 pieces and serve.

● **VARIATION: ROASTED PEPPER ROULADE**

Substitute shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese for the prosciutto; and fresh basil leaves for the spinach, roasted red bell peppers, chopped, for the sun-dried tomatoes.

● **VARIATION: SMOKY HAM ROULADE**

Substitute smoked Black Forest ham for the prosciutto, roughly chopped Swiss chard for the spinach, and sautéed mushrooms for the sun-dried tomatoes.



PAN-SEARED GROUPER WITH TOMATO-CAPER SAUCE

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

This bright Mediterranean-style sauce is made right in the skillet, so this recipe is a great one-pan dish for a weeknight. If you can't find grouper, this recipe works with any firm, white-fleshed fish, such as striped bass, snapper, or even catfish. Low-protein flour, such as Wondra or cake flour, creates a voluminous yet silky sauce, but all-purpose works fine, too.



½ cup Wondra or cake flour
4 skin-on grouper fillets
Kosher salt
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium tomato, diced
2 teaspoons brine-packed capers,
rinsed and drained

½ small shallot, finely minced
1 garlic clove, minced
Fresh lemon juice (or white wine vinegar),
for deglazing
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Add the flour to a shallow dish. Use paper towels to pat the grouper fillets dry. One at a time, dredge a fillet through the flour until it's coated on both sides. Tap off the excess flour and season both sides with salt.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat until it shimmers. Place the fillets skin side down and cook without moving them or shaking the pan until they easily release from the pan, about 5 minutes (test by sliding a spatula beneath the fillet—you should have no trouble lifting it up).
3. Flip the fillets, then transfer the skillet to the oven. Cook until the fish is opaque all the way through and it flakes easily with a fork, 8 to 10 minutes. Use a potholder to hold the pan handle. Remove the skillet from the oven and transfer the fillets to a platter.
4. Return the skillet to medium heat and add the tomato, capers, shallot, and garlic followed by a splash of lemon juice; use a wooden spoon or a spatula to scrape up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Cook until the shallot is translucent and the garlic is fragrant, about 5 minutes (if the garlic begins to brown, reduce the heat to medium-low). Season with salt and pepper. Spoon the sauce over the fillets and serve.

● **VARIATION: PINEAPPLE-LIME SAUCE**

Before dredging the fish in flour, season the flour with 1 tablespoon jerk spices. Omit the capers and substitute ½ cup chopped pineapple for the tomato. Finish the sauce with lime juice instead of lemon juice.

● **VARIATION: MUSHROOM-WINE SAUCE**

Substitute 1 cup sliced wild mushrooms for the tomatoes. Finish the sauce with white wine instead of lemon juice. Serve sprinkled with chopped fresh parsley.

DID YOU KNOW?

A bread knife happens to be a great tool for peeling and cutting pineapples! The sharp teeth on the blade make removing the tough skin an easy job.

PAN FRYING

MAKE IT CRISPY: HOW TO PAN FRY

With their crisp, shattering crusts, who doesn't love perfectly fried foods? **The best way to ease into frying at home is by pan frying**, which you can do in your sauté pan with a relatively small amount of oil.

Pan frying is a great method for cooking thinner pieces of food like fish fillets, fritters, eggplant slices for eggplant Parmesan, pounded veal or chicken cutlets, or even bone-in chicken pieces (see Pan-Fried Chicken page 63).

Secrets to Successful Pan Frying

1. PREPARE THE FOOD Pat dry the food to be fried and season as desired, then dip it in your batter or coating.

2. SET UP A LANDING SPOT Set a wire rack set over a rimmed baking sheet or paper towel-lined plate next to the stove so you have a place to transfer the fried food.

3. CHOOSE AND HEAT THE FAT These days, most people fry with oils that can handle high heat, like canola oil, pure olive oil, or peanut oil, but you can also go with shortening or, even more traditional, lard. Add enough oil to reach about halfway up the sides of the food and heat it to about 350°F, or until it shimmers. To test the oil, use an instant-read thermometer or carefully dip a corner of the breaded food into the oil. When the oil is at the right temperature, it will bubble vigorously around the food.

4. ADD THE FOOD To get the best crust, carefully add the food to the oil in a single layer without any pieces touching each other. Work in batches if necessary.

5. FRY, MAINTAINING THE TEMPERATURE

Fry the first side of the food until the crust is golden brown, moving it around if necessary to even out the cooking. Try to keep the temperature between 325°F and 350°F. If the oil cools too much, the crust absorbs more oil than it should and becomes soggy. If the oil gets too hot, the crust can burn before the food cooks through.

6. FLIP Use tongs or a wire skimmer to gently turn the food. Fry until the second side is also golden and the food is cooked through or reaches the desired temperature. Remember that the food's internal temperature will likely rise about 5°F after you remove it from the oil.

7. DRAIN AND COOL Transfer the food to your prepared wire rack or plate and let cool slightly before serving.

PRO TIP

If you need to work in batches, fried foods can be placed on a wire rack and kept warm in a 200°F oven while you finish cooking. If your oven has a convection setting, even better. It will keep the crust crisper.

How to Chop Leaves: Shredding and Chiffonade

Shredding

Shredding is most often used for large, round leafy vegetables, like iceberg lettuce or cabbage. (You can also shred Brussels sprouts after you halve them.)

- 1. START WITH A TIGHT HEAD OF CABBAGE OR LETTUCE** Remove any loose outer leaves that might be wilted or browned.
- 2. QUARTER THE HEAD** Halve the cabbage or lettuce through the core, then turn the head on its flat sides and halve through the core again.
- 3. REMOVE THE CORE** Make diagonal cuts to remove the core from each quarter.
- 4. SHRED** Working with one quarter at a time, place a flat edge of the cabbage or lettuce on the cutting board and thinly slice the wedges crosswise. Cut very thin shreds for salads and thicker ones for sautés. If you'd like shorter shreds, halve the shreds horizontally.

Chiffonade

Chiffonade (**shif-ə-NAHD**) is a finer form of shredding that is usually reserved for oblong leafy vegetables, like kale or chard, and even herbs, like basil.

- 1. REMOVE STEMS AND RIBS** Use your knife to cut off tough stems and remove ribs.
- 2. ROLL INTO A CIGAR SHAPE** Stack a few leaves and roll lengthwise into a tight cylinder.
- 3. SLICE** Slice straight across the leaves or on the bias to create fine ribbons.

Breading and Dredging

A crunchy crust is not only delicious, it protects foods, like cutlets, fish fillets, and slabs of vegetables, from the intense heat of the oil. Using the dry-hand and wet-hand method—which has you use your hands strategically when breading and dredging—prevents messy clumps of flour and egg from sticking to your hands as you work. Here's how:

1. USE TWO OR THREE CONTAINERS

Set up one shallow bowl or container for the liquid (egg wash, milk, or buttermilk) and another for your dry coating (flour, bread crumbs, crushed potato chips, or a combination). Some recipes call for an initial flour or cornstarch dredge, so use a separate container for that as well.

2. DRY AND SEASON FOOD Blot the food dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper and any other spices that might burn if they came into direct contact with hot oil.

3. DREDGE IN FLOUR OR CORNSTARCH

To do an initial dredge, use one hand—this will now be called your "dry hand"—to coat both sides of the food in flour or cornstarch, shaking off as much excess as possible.

4. DIP IN THE EGG WASH, MILK, OR

BUTTERMILK Use your dry hand to gently transfer the food to the egg wash, milk, or buttermilk; but use your second hand, your "wet hand," to turn the food in the liquid to coat and then to remove it. Let any excess liquid drip back into the bowl.

5. DREDGE IN THE COATING Use your wet hand to transfer the food to the dry coating and your dry hand to turn it to cover both sides and press it to adhere. Make sure the dry coating completely covers the food.

6. LET IT REST Using your dry hand, transfer the breaded food to a wire rack or plate. If you have time, let it rest for 20 minutes at room temperature or in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes and up to 4 hours before frying. Resting is not essential but it helps the coating adhere to the food.

FRIED FISH TACOS WITH PICKLED RADISHES AND CARROTS

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

These Baja-style fish tacos are extra crispy and crunchy thanks to the buttermilk dip and panko bread crumb dredge. You can use halibut or any other firm, white-fleshed fish, like cod, scrod, or haddock. The pickled radishes and carrots are inspired by a classic *taqueria* pickle but are made using an Asian quick-pickle technique so they can be ready in an hour or two.



PICKLED RADISHES AND CARROTS

½ pound radishes, sliced as thinly as possible
1 small red onion, halved and thinly sliced
1 large carrot, peeled and sliced as thinly as possible
2 teaspoons kosher salt
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
¾ cup distilled white vinegar
¾ cup warm water
¼ cup sugar

TACOS

Canola, grapeseed, or vegetable oil, for frying
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
1 cup buttermilk
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup panko
1½ pounds skinless halibut fillets, cut into 1-inch by 3-inch strips
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Sour cream, for serving
1 cup shredded iceberg lettuce
½ cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro
Lime wedges, for serving

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1. Make the pickled radishes and carrots: Place the radishes, onion, and carrot in a large bowl, toss with the salt, and set aside for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain the vegetables in a fine-mesh sieve, then pack into a quart-sized Mason jar or airtight container. Sprinkle with the cumin seeds. Whisk together the vinegar, water, and sugar in a small bowl until the sugar dissolves, then pour over the vegetables, pressing down to submerge them. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour (and up to 1 month).
 2. Make the tacos: Line a plate with paper towels. Pour enough oil to fill a heavy-bottomed skillet or sauté pan to a ½-inch depth. Heat the oil over medium-high heat until it reads 325°F to 350°F on an instant-read thermometer.
 3. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 250°F. Wrap the tortillas in foil and place in the oven to warm. (Alternately, wrap the tortillas in a damp paper towel and microwave for 30 seconds just before assembling the tacos.)
 4. Pour the buttermilk into a shallow dish. Combine the flour and panko in another shallow dish. Season the fish with the salt. Dip the fish in the buttermilk, then dredge it in the flour-panko mixture until it's coated on all sides. Carefully place 4 or 5 pieces of fish in the hot oil and fry until golden brown on all sides, about 4 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the fish to the prepared plate and repeat with the remaining fish.
 5. Divide the fish evenly among the tortillas. Top each taco with sour cream, lettuce, cilantro, and a generous portion of the pickled radishes and carrots (either in the taco or on the side). Squeeze the lime wedges over the top and serve.

ZUCCHINI FRITTERS WITH SMOKED CHILE-LIME DIPPING SAUCE

Makes 10 to 15 fritters

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

After you understand the basic formula for these fritters, you'll find that it's very easy to vary it by swapping other vegetables, herbs, or pinches of your favorite spices. The most time-consuming part of the recipe is waiting for the salted zucchini to release some of its water (which keeps the fritter from getting soggy), but you can prepare another dish while you wait.

ZUCCHINI FRITTERS

2 large zucchini, grated (about 3 cups)
2 teaspoons kosher salt
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 large egg, beaten
½ medium shallot, minced
Whole milk or light beer, for thinning
the batter
Canola, grapeseed, or vegetable oil,
for frying
Flaky salt, for serving
2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh cilantro

DIPPING SAUCE

½ cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream
1 chipotle in adobo sauce, finely chopped
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

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1. Prepare the zucchini: Place the zucchini in a colander, sprinkle with the salt, and toss to combine. Set the colander over the sink to let the zucchini drain for 30 minutes. Squeeze the excess water out of the zucchini by pressing down on it in the colander or wrapping it in cheesecloth (or a kitchen towel) and wringing gently.
 2. Make the dipping sauce: Stir together the mayonnaise, sour cream, chipotle, and lime juice in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until serving.
 3. Make the fritters: Whisk together the flour and baking powder in a large bowl. Stir together the zucchini, egg, and shallot in a small bowl. Pour the zucchini mixture into the flour mixture and stir to combine. Add enough milk (or beer) to the fritter mixture until it is the consistency of pancake batter.

4. Line a platter with paper towels. Pour enough oil to fill a large skillet or sauté pan to a ¼-inch depth. Heat the oil over medium heat until shimmering. Scoop about 2 tablespoons of the fritter mixture and carefully drop it into the oil. Use the back of a spoon to gently press the fritter mixture into a circle. Scoop more fritters into the pan and press them each into a circle, being careful not to overcrowd the pan. (You'll have to fry the fritters in 2 or 3 batches.)
5. Fry until golden brown on both sides, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer the fritters to the prepared platter and sprinkle with flaky salt and cilantro. Serve with the dipping sauce.

● **VARIATION: CORN FRITTERS**

Substitute 2½ cups fresh or frozen corn kernels for the zucchini and stir into the fritter batter. Substitute 1 thinly sliced scallion for the shallot. Add 1 teaspoon ground cumin and ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper to the batter. Thin the batter with beer and lime juice.





PAN-FRIED CHICKEN

Serves 6

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; large skillet or sauté pan

Soaking the chicken overnight in buttermilk is ideal, but if you are pressed for time you can dredge the chicken pieces in seasoned flour, dip in buttermilk, dredge again, let the chicken rest for 5 to 10 minutes, and then fry.

1 (3- to 3½-pound) chicken, cut into 8 pieces
1 quart buttermilk
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 tablespoons sugar
A few fresh herb leaves or sprigs, such as bay leaves, rosemary, tarragon, or thyme (optional)
1 tablespoon sweet paprika

1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons garlic powder
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
Peanut oil, canola oil, or vegetable shortening, for frying

1. Place the chicken in a large airtight container. Mix the buttermilk, 2 tablespoons of the salt, and the sugar in a medium bowl until the salt and sugar dissolve. Pour the mixture over the chicken, add the herbs (if using), cover, and refrigerate 6 hours or overnight.
2. Stir together the paprika, black pepper, the remaining 2 teaspoons salt, the garlic powder, and the cayenne in a small bowl. Combine the flour and baking powder in a 1-gallon resealable plastic bag or a large lidded container. Seal the bag (or cover the container) and shake to combine.
3. Drain the chicken in a colander (discard the buttermilk) and transfer to a baking sheet. Sprinkle the chicken with the spice blend. Add 1 piece of chicken to the flour mixture, seal the bag, and shake to coat. Transfer to a plate and repeat.
4. Pour enough oil to fill a 12-inch heavy-bottomed skillet to a ½-inch depth. Heat the oil until it reads 325°F to 350°F on an instant-read thermometer. Carefully place the chicken thighs in the center of the skillet (because they take the longest to cook) and the legs, breasts, and wings around the perimeter, being careful not to overcrowd the pan. (You may have to fry the chicken in batches.) Fry until the chicken is golden brown and crisp on both sides, and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the chicken reads 165°F for the breasts and 170°F for the drumsticks and thighs. Transfer the chicken to a wire rack and let cool slightly before serving.

BRAISING & STEWING

SO TENDER, SO DELICIOUS

The differences between braising and stewing include the size of the centerpiece ingredient and the amount of liquid used.

Your Dutch oven is the pot to use for large braises, stews, and soups. The pot's large volume and tight lid is perfect for these moist-heat cooking methods, which render tough cuts of meat, like lamb shanks, pork shoulder, beef brisket, short ribs, or chuck roast, extremely tender.

The word *braise* generally applies to a larger piece of food, like the beef chuck used for a pot roast, cooked in relatively little liquid. The word *stew* usually refers to food that is cut into bite-sized chunks and cooked in a fair amount of liquid, like the Boeuf Bourguignon on page 67.

Secrets to Successful Braising and Stewing

1. BROWN THE MEAT The braising or stewing meat should be blotted dry with paper towels, and then seasoned and seared to develop its color and flavor. If you have a lot of small pieces, brown them in batches. Transfer the meat to a plate when you're done browning.

2. SAUTÉ YOUR AROMATICS Spoon off and discard all but a few tablespoons of the fat left in the pan (this step will ensure that your sauce isn't greasy) and add your vegetables. Cook them for a few minutes to brown them a bit, stirring them often.

3. DEGLAZE THE PAN Your pan should be full of fond, the browned bits that stick to the bottom of the pan. Fond is what will build character and backbone in the base sauce for your braise or stew. Add some wine, beer, or other liquid; scrape up the browned bits at the bottom of the pan; and cook until the liquid is slightly reduced.

4. RETURN THE MEAT TO THE PAN, ADD MORE LIQUID, AND COOK Put the meat back in the pan, along with some broth or water. For a braise, the liquid should reach about halfway up the meat; for a stew, the liquid can cover the meat. Bring everything to a boil, then cover and simmer over moderately low heat until the meat is tender.

5. FINISH AND SEASON When the meat is fork-tender, check the thickness of the liquid. If you want the sauce to have more viscosity, you can remove the meat and boil the liquid to reduce it. Or you can whisk in a nub of *beurre manié*—softened butter mixed with an equal amount of flour—and watch the sauce thicken like magic.



BOEUF BOURGUIGNON

Serves 6

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Dutch oven

This classic French stew is often made with just red wine, but the addition of beef stock or store-bought demi-glace (often available near the canned broths in the grocery store) enhances the meaty flavor. By the time the stew is finished cooking, the vegetables will have given up all their flavor. They are usually strained out, and the beef is served just with its liquid over buttered noodles or mashed potatoes. If you prefer to have the carrots and onions remain in your stew, add them just for the last hour of cooking.

6 fresh parsley sprigs, plus extra chopped fresh parsley, for serving
3 fresh thyme sprigs
2 dried bay leaves
3 whole, peeled garlic cloves
3 to 4 pounds boneless chuck roast or top blade roast, cut into 2- to 3-inch pieces
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons canola, grapeseed, or vegetable oil, plus extra if needed

4 strips thick-cut bacon, cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces
2 medium yellow onions, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 (750 ml) bottle medium-bodied red wine, such as pinot noir
4 carrots, peeled and cut crosswise into 1-inch lengths
1 to 2 cups beef stock
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
Buttered noodles or mashed potatoes, for serving

1. Set a 6-inch square of cheesecloth on a cutting board. Place the parsley sprigs, thyme, bay leaves, and garlic on the cheesecloth and fold it over the herbs to make a bouquet garni. Use butcher's twine to tie the cheesecloth around the herb stems. Liberally season the beef with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the bacon and cook until crispy on both sides. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate (reserve for snacking or for another recipe), leaving the rendered fat in the pan.
3. Increase the heat to medium-high. Once the bacon fat just barely begins to smoke, add the beef, being careful not to overcrowd the pot.

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(You'll probably have to brown the meat in a few batches.) Sear the meat until browned on all sides. Transfer the browned beef to a plate and repeat with the remaining beef, adding more oil if needed.

4. Reduce the heat to medium, add the onions, and cook, stirring often, until soft and golden. Sprinkle the flour into the pan and continue to cook, stirring constantly, about 5 minutes more.
5. Pour 1 cup of the wine into the pot and bring to a boil, stirring often and scraping any browned bits up from the bottom of the pot. Return the beef and any accumulated juices to the pot along with the remaining wine, the carrots, bouquet garni, and enough stock to cover the meat. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and gently simmer until a fork slips into the beef with no resistance, 1½ to 2 hours. (You can also place the covered Dutch oven in a 300°F oven for 1½ to 2 hours.)
6. Turn off the heat and use a slotted spoon to transfer the beef to a medium bowl. Discard the bouquet garni. Strain the cooking liquid through a fine-mesh sieve set over a large bowl. Reserve the vegetables for serving, or leave the cooked vegetables in the sieve and press on them with a spatula to extract as much liquid as possible, then discard. Return the meat and the liquid to a clean pot and simmer gently until the liquid slightly reduces, about 10 minutes. Add the butter and swirl to combine. Serve with or without the cooked vegetables and over buttered noodles or mashed potatoes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Kitchen shears are great for snipping herbs, trimming pastry dough, slicing pizza, or roughly chopping whole tomatoes while still in the can.

DUTCH OVEN BEANS

Makes 6 cups

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Dutch oven

A pot of beans can be as simple or as complex as you like. They can be a main dish, a comforting side dish, or an ingredient that you add to other recipes, like the soups on the next few pages. High-quality dried beans from specialty shops or farmers' markets are usually fresher than those you find in the supermarket, so they're worth seeking out. Regardless of the type of beans you buy, just be sure they don't look especially dry, with wrinkly skin; those will take forever to cook—if they cook at all.

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large carrot, peeled and roughly
chopped (optional)
1 rib celery, roughly chopped (optional)

½ large yellow onion, diced (optional)
3 or 4 garlic cloves, smashed (optional)
1 pound dried beans
1 tablespoon kosher salt

1. Melt the butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the carrot, celery, onion, and garlic (if using) and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the beans and salt and enough cold water to cover by 1 inch.
3. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to low. Cook the beans on the stove top, covered, until tender, 1 to 3 hours, or in a 350°F oven, covered, until tender, 1 to 2 hours. (The freshness and variety of the bean will affect the cooking time.) Transfer the beans and the cooking liquid to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 1 week, or freeze them in resealable freezer bags (either in the liquid or drained of the liquid) for up to 6 months.

TO SOAK OR NOT TO SOAK?

Soaking dried beans for 6 to 8 hours before cooking (or even overnight) makes them cook more quickly and more evenly than beans that have not been soaked. Many people also claim that if you drain off the soaking liquid and cook the soaked beans in fresh water, they'll be easier to digest. The verdict: While soaking is not absolutely necessary, it could make a better pot of beans. Plus, if you soak the beans in the morning, they're ready to cook by dinnertime.



BLACK BEAN SOUP WITH ROASTED TOMATOES

Serves 4

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Dutch oven

This hearty soup is a great way to use some of the Dutch Oven Beans (see recipe page 69).

5 or 6 whole, peeled garlic cloves
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 or 5 plum tomatoes, halved
1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus extra as needed
2 ribs celery, finely diced
1 large carrot, peeled and finely diced
1 large yellow onion, finely diced
1 tablespoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

6 cups chicken stock (see Basic Chicken Stock page 32)
2 cups cooked black beans (see Dutch Oven Beans page 69)
Freshly ground black pepper
1 lime, cut into wedges
Sour cream, for serving
Diced avocado, for serving
Chopped fresh cilantro, for serving

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the garlic cloves in the center of a large square of aluminum foil. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of oil, then enclose in a bundle and set on a baking sheet. Add the tomatoes (cut side up), drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the oil, and season with salt. Roast until the tomatoes are soft and slightly charred, 30 to 40 minutes. Transfer to a large plate to cool, then squeeze the garlic out from skins. Chop the garlic and tomatoes.
2. Heat the remaining oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the celery, carrot, and onion and cook, stirring often, until the onion is softened and lightly golden, 10 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-low and add the cumin, salt, and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the stock and beans.
3. Bring the soup to a boil over high heat, then reduce to medium-low. Add the chopped tomatoes and garlic, season with pepper, and simmer for 30 minutes. Ladle 1½ to 2 cups of soup into a blender and purée. Return the soup to the pot and stir. Serve with the lime wedges, sour cream, avocado, and cilantro.

PRO TIP

Get teary when chopping onions? Try using a very sharp knife or try refrigerating your onions in a bowl of cold water for 30 minutes before chopping. And if all else fails, put on a pair of glasses (or sunglasses) to shield your eyes.

PASTA E FAGIOLI

Serves 6

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Dutch oven

Pasta e fagioli, which you can make with Dutch Oven Beans (see recipe page 69) or canned beans, is a comforting Italian vegetable soup that is filling enough to serve as a full meal, perhaps with a light salad on the side.

4 strips bacon, cut into ½-inch pieces	1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or 1½ teaspoons dried oregano
1 medium yellow onion, diced	1 Parmigiano-Reggiano rind (optional), plus grated cheese, for serving
1 small carrot, peeled and diced	1 large tomato, seeded and diced
1 rib celery, diced	1 cup (8 ounces) small pasta, such as ditalini
2 garlic cloves, minced	Kosher salt
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes	Freshly ground black pepper
1 quart chicken stock (see Basic Chicken Stock page 32)	¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
2 (15-ounce) cans cannellini beans or 2½ cups Dutch Oven Beans (page 69)	2 scallions, thinly sliced on the bias
	Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

1. Place the bacon in a Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Cook until the fat renders and the bacon is browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Add the onion, carrot, and celery and cook until the vegetables are soft, about 8 minutes. Stir in the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes more.
2. Add the stock, beans, oregano, and the cheese rind (if using). Increase the heat to high, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, and simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add the tomato, bacon, and pasta and season with salt and pepper. Increase the heat to medium-high and cook until the pasta is al dente, about 10 minutes (or according to package directions), adding water if necessary to bring the soup to the desired consistency. Turn off the heat and let the soup stand for 5 minutes.
4. Stir in 3 tablespoons of the parsley. Serve with the remaining 1 tablespoon parsley, and the scallions, black pepper, and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve with the grated Parmigiano-Reggiano.



CHICKEN AND ANDOUILLE GUMBO

Serves 8 to 10

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Dutch oven

Creating the dark roux used in Cajun and Creole dishes, like gumbo, is time-consuming but it's key: Dark roux contributes the signature flavor of these stews. The darker a roux gets, the more it must be stirred, because it burns easily once it passes medium brown. Gumbo comes in many forms, including shrimp, crawfish, and okra. This recipe is a basic meaty gumbo that you can easily adapt.



1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs,
cut into 1-inch pieces
1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning
4 ribs celery, diced
1 medium yellow onion, diced
1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
2 teaspoons kosher salt
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ cup vegetable oil

1 pound andouille sausage, cut into
½-inch rounds
1 cup all-purpose flour
8 cups store-bought or homemade chicken
stock (see Basic Chicken Stock page 32)
2 dried bay leaves
Cooked rice, for serving
1 bunch scallions, green tops only,
thinly sliced

1. Toss the chicken with the Cajun seasoning in a medium bowl and set aside. In another medium bowl, toss together the celery, onion, and bell pepper with the salt and cayenne; set aside.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add the sausage and cook until the fat begins to render. Add the chicken and cook until browned on both sides. (The chicken won't be cooked all the way through.) Use a slotted spoon to transfer the sausage and chicken to a plate and set aside.
3. Add the remaining 6 tablespoons oil to the pot and increase the heat to medium-high. Once the oil shimmers, add the flour and stir in with a wooden spoon. Continue cooking, stirring often, being sure that the wooden spoon reaches the edges of the pot so that the roux doesn't burn. Once the mixture begins to turn light brown, reduce the heat to low and continue cooking, stirring often, until the roux is deep brown, about 40 minutes.
4. Increase the heat to medium and add the celery, onion, and bell pepper. The roux will steam and splatter a little, but continue to cook the vegetables, stirring often, until softened, about 5 minutes.
5. Return the sausage and chicken to the pot and stir to combine. Slowly add the stock, stirring constantly to incorporate it and making sure to trail the spoon around the edges of the pot to ensure nothing is stuck at the bottom. Bring the liquid to a boil, then add the bay leaves and reduce the heat to low. Simmer for about 1 hour, skimming off any oil that might rise to the top. Remove bay leaves, serve over rice, and sprinkle with scallions.

PRO TIP

When you know you want to thicken a stew or soup, you can sprinkle flour over onions or aromatic vegetables as you're sautéing them to make a cheater roux.

SWEETS & SAUCES

CREATING SPOON SWEETS AND CLASSIC SAUCES

Start by using these classically derived recipes, then once you have the method down pat, **play around with the flavors and seasonings to create your own versions.**

French-style sauces and spoon sweets (such as curds and pastry creams) are known for their silken, voluminous texture. They are best made in a double boiler since they rely on egg yolks (which can scramble if exposed to direct heat).

As you make these sauces, you'll also get practice with a technique called tempering, in which you slowly heat raw eggs with a hot liquid to prevent them from curdling. You can do this by either gradually adding the hot liquid, such as melted butter, to the egg yolks, or by whisking the yolks with a small amount of the hot liquid, like warm milk, so the yolks are warm and "tempered" before whisking them back into the rest of the sauce. Start by using these classically derived recipes, then once you have the method down pat, play around with the flavors and seasonings to create your own versions.

PASTRY CREAM

Makes 4½ cups

Equipment: Saucepan or saucier

Pastry cream is a thick vanilla pudding-like sweet cream that you'll often find piped into éclairs, Boston cream doughnuts, and cream puffs. You can also spread it in a baked tart shell and top with fruit, dollop it on top of pavlova (a pie-like meringue), or layer it with cookies and fruit for a trifle or icebox cake. Instead of vanilla extract, you could substitute any other extract, such as almond or coconut.

1 cup sugar
5 tablespoons cornstarch
8 large egg yolks

1 quart whole milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Whisk together the sugar and cornstarch in a medium bowl and make a well in the center. Whisk together the egg yolks and 2 tablespoons of the milk in another medium bowl, then add it to the well in the sugar mixture and whisk until combined.
2. Pour the remaining milk into a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add the vanilla extract and warm the mixture over medium heat (keep an eye on it so it doesn't boil over).
3. Prepare a large bowl with ice water and set aside. Slowly whisk some of the warm milk into the egg mixture, adding more while whisking until the bottom of the bowl feels warm. Return the egg-milk mixture to the saucepan.
4. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a heat-safe rubber spatula that can get into the corners of the saucepan, until the mixture is thick and glossy, tastes sweet, and

doesn't leave a starchy aftertaste. Transfer the hot pastry cream to a medium heat-safe bowl and set over the ice water, making sure the ice water doesn't get into the pastry cream. Let the pastry cream cool, stirring occasionally, until it reaches room temperature. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the pastry cream's surface to prevent a skin from forming on the top. Refrigerate until well chilled, for at least 2 hours or up to 1 week.

DID YOU KNOW?

The beveled edge of the saucepan helps you easily get into the corners of the pan as you make complex sauces.

LEMON CURD

Makes about 2 cups, enough to fill a 9-inch tart shell

Equipment: Saucepan or saucier

Lemon curd is amazingly versatile. You can use it to fill a prebaked tart shell, spread it between layers of cake, or serve a spoonful alongside a cookie or scone.

It is rich and creamy yet tart and refreshing all at once.

2 large eggs plus 2 large yolks
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest
plus ½ cup fresh lemon juice (from
3 or 4 lemons)

¼ teaspoon kosher salt
6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)

1. Fill a medium saucepan with about 1 inch of water and bring to a simmer.
2. Meanwhile, whisk together the eggs, egg yolks, and sugar in a medium heat-safe bowl until smooth and pale yellow. Add the lemon zest and juice and the salt. Place the bowl over the simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Use a wooden spoon to constantly stir the lemon mixture, scraping down the sides of the bowl often, until the curd begins to thicken and it reaches 165°F to 170°F on an instant-read thermometer, 8 to 12 minutes.
3. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and set on top of a folded kitchen towel. Add the butter 1 tablespoon at a time, and whisk until incorporated. Set the bowl over the simmering water again and continue to whisk until the curd is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon and it reaches 175°F to 180°F. The whisk's tines should leave a trail that quickly disappears in the bottom of the pan. (If you overcook the curd, the whisk will leave a wide trail that does not fill in quickly.) Stir in the vanilla extract (if using).
4. For the ultimate in smoothness, pour the warm curd through a fine-mesh sieve set over a bowl. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the curd's surface to prevent a skin from forming on the top. Refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours and up to 1 week.

PRO TIP

If you don't have a zester, you can peel the lemon zest off in strips and pulse it with the sugar in a mini food processor or spice grinder.





BÉARNAISE

Makes about 1 cup

Equipment: Chef's knife or santoku; Saucepan or saucier

Béarnaise sauce is a savory butter emulsion that's closely related to hollandaise (which you've had on your eggs Benedict), but it's flavored with shallots and tarragon.

1 teaspoon black peppercorns
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon white wine
1 tablespoon minced shallot
¼ cup chopped fresh tarragon

2 large egg yolks
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or water
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1½ sticks (12 tablespoons) unsalted butter,
softened

1. Place the peppercorns in a resealable plastic bag. Use the bottom of a skillet to smash the peppercorns until they are roughly cracked. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the peppercorns, vinegar, wine, shallot, and 2 tablespoons of the tarragon. Gently simmer until the vinegar mixture is reduced by about half. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve set over a medium heat-safe bowl, using a spatula to press on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard the solids.
2. Fill a medium saucepan with 1 or 2 inches of water and bring to a simmer. Place the bowl with the vinegar mixture over the simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Reduce the heat to medium-low, then whisk in the egg yolks, lemon juice, and salt. Whisk until the yolks triple in volume.
3. Set the bowl on top of a folded kitchen towel. Add the butter, 1 tablespoon at a time, whisking until incorporated between additions. Whisk in the remaining 2 tablespoons tarragon. The béarnaise should be just a little thinner than mayonnaise; adjust the thickness and the flavor with a little more lemon juice or water as needed.

BLENDER BÉARNAISE

To make béarnaise in the blender, make the vinegar mixture (without tarragon) and strain it into a blender. Add the egg yolks, lemon juice, and salt and blend until combined. With the blender on, slowly drizzle in melted butter (instead of softened) through the opening in the lid or use an emulsion cup until all of the butter is added and the sauce is thick, creamy, and emulsified. Add 2 tablespoons of the tarragon and blend again. Fold in the remaining 2 tablespoons tarragon and keep warm.

MENUS

Cozy Winter Lunch

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Green Beans with Lemon, Garlic, and
Pine Nuts (page 41)
Lemon Curd over Store-Bought
Pound Cake (page 78)

Casual Latin Party

Black Bean Soup with Roasted
Tomatoes (page 71)
Fried Fish Tacos with Pickled Radishes and
Carrots (page 58)
Yellow Rice with Sofrito (page 30)
Sliced Fresh Mangoes and Pineapple

Italian-American Dinner Party

Julienned Zucchini Salad (page 23)
Pasta e Fagioli (page 72)
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Elegant Dinner Party

Zucchini Fritters with Smoked
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Comfort Food Supper

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Glazed Carrots with Garlic and
Ginger (page 27)
Lemon Curd over Store-Bought Biscuits
with Strawberries (page 78)

Caring for Your Pots and Pans

Stainless-steel cookware is incredibly durable and easy to care for. If browned bits of food stick to the bottom of your pots and pans, you can do what chefs do and deglaze them. Just heat up the pans over moderate heat, add some liquid, and bring to a boil; the browned bits should scrape right off with a spatula or wooden spoon. The liquid—which could be wine, juice, vinegar, club soda, broth, or water—could be the base of a sauce or you can just use the method to help clean the pan. Covering the pan to trap steam while the liquid simmers helps too.

If your pan is nicely deglazed, you shouldn't need to do more than wash the pans in hot soapy water. You can put them in the dishwasher but the detergents tend to discolor the cookware over time, so we recommend washing by hand.

If you find that your pans take on a gold-brown or bluish tint (which is caused by overheating or mineral residue) or white spots (from boiling salted water), washing them with a nonabrasive stainless-steel cleaner or baking soda can work wonders. Just mix one of these powders into a paste with some water and rub on the still-warm pans with a sponge or cloth. Rinse, and then wash with hot soapy water and dry with a lint-free towel, and your pan will look like new.

While hard to destroy, stainless-steel pots and pans aren't indestructible. For example, steel wool pads can leave scratches and bleach can cause the metal to corrode. Severe overheating (above 500°F) can cause permanent discoloration and structural damage, so never leave your cookware set over a high burner for an extended period of time if it's empty or contains too little food.

