

# How to COOK

## Full Boil

- Boiling food involves immersing food in boiling water until cooked.
- The temperature at which water will come to a “full boil” varies based on atmospheric pressure, but is usually around 212° F / 100° C.
- At a full boil, the water has fast-moving, rolling waves of bubbles and gives off steam.
- Because of the constant movement and extreme heat of the water, boiling may damage delicate foods.

## Slow Boil

- The temperature at which water will come to a “slow boil” is usually 205° F / 96° C.
- At a slow boil, the water has slow-moving and large bubbles.

## Simmering

- Technique in which foods are cooked in hot liquids kept at or just below the boiling point.
- To keep a pot simmering, bring it to a boil and then reduce the heat to a point where the formation of bubbles barely continues (200° F / 94° C).
- Simmering is gentler than boiling and will help to prevent food from toughening and/or breaking up.

## Poaching

- 140° F - 190° F / 60° C - 88° C.
- Liquid should not come to a boil.
- Ideal for eggs and fish.

## Sautéing

- Cooking food in a pan, over high heat, in a small amount of fat (butter, oil).
- Heat pan and fat to a high temperature before adding food.
- To check if the pan is hot enough, add a couple of drops of water to the pan. If it sizzles vigorously and evaporates quickly, the pan is hot.
- Once food is in the pan, it is important to move it around with a utensil continuously.
- Food is usually cut into smaller pieces.

## Broiling/Grilling/Barbecuing

- Broiling - The heat source is above the food.
- Grilling - The heat source is below the food.
- Barbecuing (BBQ) – heat source is produced by burning wood or coal.
- Best to marinate the food first (soak in a seasoned liquid).

### Frying

(warning: hot oil may splatter and cause burns)

- **Pan frying**
  - Similar to sautéing with oil, but at a lower heat.
  - Ideal for large pieces of meat, such as chicken, steaks, pork chops and fish.
  - Pan is coated with a thin layer of oil.
- **Shallow frying**
  - Oil should reach about halfway up the sides of the food being cooked.
  - Ideal for chicken, battered shrimp and eggplant parmesan.
  - Food should be flipped half way through.
- **Deep Frying**
  - Oil completely immerses the food being cooked.
  - Food does not have to be flipped.
  - Ideal for french fries and donuts.
- **Stir frying**
  - The food is cut into smaller pieces, similar to sautéing.
  - A wok is typically used. A wok is a deep metal bowl with gently sloping sides.

### Microwaving

- Never put metal cookware in the microwave.
- Foods that have skins, such as potatoes and hot dogs, should be pierced with a fork before cooking to release steam while cooking.
- To prevent splattering and to help food heat evenly, it should be covered with a microwave safe lid.
- Rotate the food during cooking to help ensure even cooking.
- Microwaving can remove nutrients from vegetables.
- Look for microwave instructions on food packaging.



### Steaming

- Steaming is a moist heating cooking method without submersing food into water. This method uses the heat from steam to cook food.
- Ideal for fish and vegetables.
- Very healthy form of cooking because it does not use oil or butter and does not remove nutrients from the food like microwave cooking can do.

### Baking

- Dry heat method of cooking.
- Usually associated with food items that require batters and dough.
- Avoid over-mixing dough and batters. Over-mixing activates the gluten in flour, which makes baked goods firm and chewy rather than light and crumbly.
- Avoid using cold eggs. Cold eggs and dairy products don't bond well, which prevents air from becoming trapped in the mixture. This can result in dense cakes and muffins.
- Don't use liquid measuring cups to measure dry ingredients.

### Common Cooking Terms

- **Whip** – beat vigorously using a wire whisk or electric mixer.
- **Zest** – Remove the colored outer layer of a citrus fruit. Use a grater or fruit zester to rub over the sides of the fruit. Avoid the white layer of skin beneath the colored layer.
- **Knead** – Pressing and folding of dough with the heels of your hands.
- **Fold** – Gently mix ingredients using a rubber spatula. Cut through the center of the mixture, bringing mixture from the bottom of the bowl to the surface. Rotate the bowl to ensure uniformity.
- **Whisk** – Stirring or mixing ingredients using a wire whisk or fork. Allows air into the mixture. Not as vigorous as whipping.
- **Steep** – Submerge a food in water that has been heated to just below boiling point.
- **Score** – Make shallow cuts on the surface of a food to tenderize, allow fat to escape, allow flavors to seep in or for decoration.
- **Reduce** – Boil quickly so that some of the liquid evaporates, decreasing the overall volume.
- **Grease** – Coat a pan or baking tray with a layer of butter or oil to prevent sticking.
- **Blanch** – Place fruit, vegetables or nuts in boiling water to partially cook them to help intensify their flavor and color. Then, plunge into cold water to stop the cooking.
- **Baste** – Rubbing food with fat or other liquid during cooking to add moisture and flavor.



### Preparing a Meal

1. Decide what you would like to cook.
  - Ask the client for their favorite recipes.
  - With your client, look through cookbooks to see if anything piques their interest.
2. Gather the ingredients.
  - Check the kitchen for ingredients the client may already have (check expiration dates).
  - Go to the grocery store.
3. Prepare the food for cooking.
  - Wash and clean the food.
4. Preheat (if applicable).
  - Oven
  - Water
  - Pan – heat the pan before adding oil
5. Follow the recipe.
6. Never leave the kitchen while food is cooking.
7. Turn off the oven when the food is finished cooking.