



# COOKING METHODS TO MASTER

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

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## 10 COOKING TERMS TO KNOW

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

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

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

## Roasting

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

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

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

## Sautéing

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

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## USE A FOOD THERMOMETER TO KNOW WHEN COOKED MEATS ARE SAFE TO EAT:

- ▶ **Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb:**  
steaks, chops, roasts
    - 145°F (63°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
  - ▶ **Ham: fresh or smoked (uncooked)**
    - 145°F (63°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
  - ▶ **Ground meats**
    - 160°F (71°C)
  - ▶ **Poultry (all parts and stuffing)**
    - 165°F (74°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
  - ▶ **Fish and Shellfish**
    - 145°F (63°C)
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nonstick cooking spray or an oil spritzer. When the pan is hot, add the food and turn occasionally. Add broth, a splash of wine, herbs, or spices while sautéing to bring out flavor without adding more fat.

## Stir-Frying

Stir-frying is also used to cook smaller pieces of meat, seafood, poultry, and vegetables. But stir-frying is done over high heat so that foods cook in just a few minutes. It's a good idea to have all your ingredients measured and prepped before you begin.

Add a small amount of oil, such as canola or soybean oil, to a wok or nonstick frying pan. Heat over high heat. When the oil is hot, add foods and stir frequently until the foods are cooked.

## Poaching

Poaching uses water or a flavorful liquid (like stock, broth, or wine) to gently cook fish, poultry, eggs, or whole fruits (like apples and pears).

Add the cooking liquid to a large skillet or saucepan and bring it to a boil. Lower the heat and add the food, making sure that the food is completely immersed in liquid. Simmer over low heat until the food is cooked. For more flavor, add herbs, spices, or vegetables like carrots, onions, and celery to the poaching liquid.



## Steaming

Steaming is a quick cooking method for foods like vegetables, fish, shellfish, and chicken.

Bring a few inches of water to a boil in a pot that is large enough to hold a steamer basket or insert. Add the steamer to the pot. Fill the steamer with food and cover tightly. (Some recipes may instruct you to reduce the water to a simmer before covering the pot.)

A boneless piece of fish or chicken breast will take 15 to 30 minutes to steam. Steam vegetables for just a few minutes until they are tender but not mushy.

To steam vegetables without a steamer, add them to a pan with a small amount of boiling liquid that does not completely cover the food. Cover tightly and cook until tender.