

Different Cooking Techniques

There are a few fundamental cooking techniques that are essential for every home cook. While this list is by no means exhaustive, below are some of the most commonly used techniques in most recipes.

Boiling

Boiling is typically used for foods that need to be cooked quickly, such as pasta or root vegetables like potatoes. Try to avoid boiling most vegetables as it can reduce the nutrients in your veggies. When boiling, the whole pot is in action, and it is rolling and churning. A tip to bring your pot to a boil quickly is to start with hot water, and then place a lid on the top to keep the heat from escaping.

Simmering

Simmering is usually used for foods that generally take longer to cook and that we want to infuse flavour into, like a sauce, soup or braised recipe. When we talk about simmering, we mean that a bubble will break through the surface every second or so, and no more than that. To keep a slow simmer from boiling over, use the lowest setting of your burner, or if that is too strong, move the pot halfway off the burner, or use a heat diffuser or simmer ring.



Stir Frying

Stir frying is a great way to cook fast, fresh and fun meals. Stir frying involves tossing bite sized pieces of food in a wok or pan with a little oil at high heat. The high temperature required for stir frying sears food quickly and preserves the natural juices. It only takes minutes, so vegetables stay bright and crisp and meat is browned and tender. Try using a healthy fat such as olive oil for stir frying.





Different Cooking Techniques

Steaming

Steaming is a great way to gently cook your vegetables. Steaming allows food to retain its shape, colour, and texture and does not involve any fats. Unlike boiling, which leaches water-soluble nutrients from food, steaming keeps most of the nutrients-as well as the flavour and colour-intact. Steaming is ideal for foods that need moisture, such as most vegetables, or light proteins like chicken or most fish or shellfish. If you do not have steamer simply use a colander over a pot of boiling water and a well-fitting lid.



Baking

Baking is a great cooking technique as it allows you to step away from the kitchen while your food is cooking. Baking is the process of cooking by dry heat, usually in an oven. Baking is commonly used for breads, but is also a great method for cooking meats and vegetables. Baking your vegetables, particularly root vegetables such as potatoes and parsnips, will give them more flavour and preserve more nutrients than boiling