



Basic Cooking Methods

Dry Heat Methods

Roasting	Cooking food in an oven with dry heat, typically for larger items like meats and vegetables. Tips: Use a roasting rack for even cooking; baste occasionally with pan juices.
Baking	Similar to roasting but often used for items like bread, cakes, and pastries. Tips: Preheat oven thoroughly; use accurate measurements for ingredients.
Grilling	Cooking food over direct heat from a grill, often imparting a smoky flavor. Tips: Preheat grill; oil grates to prevent sticking; control heat to avoid burning.
Sautéing	Cooking food quickly in a small amount of fat over relatively high heat. Tips: Use a pan large enough to avoid overcrowding; keep ingredients moving for even cooking.
Stir-Frying	Similar to sautéing but typically done in a wok over high heat with constant stirring. Tips: Prepare ingredients ahead of time; add ingredients in order of cooking time.
Broiling	Cooking food under direct, intense heat from an oven broiler. Tips: Watch food closely to prevent burning; use broiler-safe cookware.

Moist Heat Methods

Boiling	Cooking food in water or another liquid that has reached its highest possible temperature. Tips: Use enough liquid to cover food; add salt to boiling water to enhance flavor.
Simmering	Cooking food gently in liquid just below the boiling point. Tips: Use for tenderizing tough cuts of meat; maintain a consistent, gentle heat.
Steaming	Cooking food using steam from boiling water, preserving nutrients and moisture. Tips: Use a steamer basket or insert; ensure water doesn't touch the food.
Poaching	Cooking delicate foods in a liquid at a low temperature, often used for eggs and fish. Tips: Use a shallow pan; add vinegar to help eggs hold their shape.
Braising	Combination of browning food in fat then simmering in liquid for an extended period. Tips: Use for tougher cuts of meat; allows for deep flavor development.

Baking Essentials

Measuring Techniques

Dry Ingredients	Use dry measuring cups; spoon ingredients in lightly, then level off with a straight edge. Examples: Flour, sugar, baking powder.
Liquid Ingredients	Use liquid measuring cups; place on a flat surface and check at eye level. Examples: Water, milk, oil.
Fats (Solid)	Pack firmly into dry measuring cups, or use the water displacement method. Examples: Butter, shortening.

Mixing Methods

Creaming Method	Cream together fat and sugar until light and fluffy, then add eggs and dry ingredients. Best for: Cakes, cookies.
Rubbing Method	Rub fat into dry ingredients until it resembles coarse crumbs, then add liquid. Best for: Scones, biscuits.
Foaming Method	Whip eggs and sugar to incorporate air, then gently fold in dry ingredients. Best for: Sponge cakes, meringues.
One-Bowl Method	Combine all ingredients in one bowl, following the order specified in the recipe. Best for: Quick breads, muffins.

Leavening Agents

Baking Soda	Requires an acid to activate (e.g., buttermilk, vinegar). Function: Creates carbon dioxide for leavening.
Baking Powder	Contains both an acid and a base, so it only needs moisture to activate. Function: Creates carbon dioxide for leavening.
Yeast	A living organism that consumes sugar and produces carbon dioxide. Function: Leavens bread and other baked goods.

Knife Skills

Basic Cuts

Dice	Cutting food into uniform cubes. Uses: Soups, stews, sauces.
Mince	Cutting food into very small pieces. Uses: Garlic, herbs, ginger.
Chop	Cutting food into irregularly shaped pieces. Uses: Vegetables, nuts, chocolate.
Julienne	Cutting food into long, thin matchstick-like strips. Uses: Salads, stir-fries, garnishes.
Brunoise	Cutting food into very small dice (1/8 inch cubes), often from julienned vegetables. Uses: Garnishes, sauces.

Sauce Making

Mother Sauces

Béchamel	A white sauce made from milk thickened with a white roux (butter and flour). Uses: Cream sauces, gratins.
Velouté	A light sauce made from a light stock (chicken, veal, or fish) thickened with a blond roux. Uses: Base for other sauces, soups.
Espagnole	A brown sauce made from brown stock, mirepoix, and tomatoes, thickened with a brown roux. Uses: Base for rich meat sauces.
Sauce Tomate	A tomato sauce made from tomatoes, vegetables, and seasonings. Uses: Pasta sauces, stews.
Hollandaise	An emulsified sauce made from egg yolks, melted butter, and lemon juice. Uses: Eggs Benedict, vegetables.

Knife Handling Techniques

The Grip: Hold the knife with a firm grip, curling your fingers around the handle. Pinch the blade with your thumb and forefinger for better control.
The Guide Hand: Curl your fingers inward to protect them, and use your knuckles as a guide for the knife blade.
The Rocking Motion: Keep the tip of the knife on the cutting board and use a rocking motion to slice through food.
Maintaining the Knife: Keep your knives sharp by honing them regularly with a steel. Have knives professionally sharpened as needed.

Emulsification Techniques

Temporary Emulsion: Two liquids that do not stay mixed for long, such as oil and vinegar in vinaigrette. Technique: Whisk vigorously before serving.
Permanent Emulsion: Two liquids that stay mixed, such as mayonnaise (oil and egg yolks). Technique: Incorporate one liquid slowly into the other while whisking constantly. Lecithin in the egg yolks acts as an emulsifier.
Breaking Emulsion: When an emulsion separates due to improper technique, temperature, or ingredient ratios. Can sometimes be fixed by adding a small amount of a stabilizing agent (e.g., mustard in vinaigrette) or starting the emulsion again from scratch.

Knife Safety

Always cut away from yourself and others.
Use a stable cutting board.
Keep your knives clean and dry.
Never try to catch a falling knife.
Store knives properly in a knife block or sheath.

Roux Preparation

White Roux	Cooked briefly to retain a pale color, used for béchamel sauce. Ratio: Equal parts butter and flour.
Blond Roux	Cooked slightly longer until it turns a light golden color, used for velouté sauce. Ratio: Equal parts butter and flour.
Brown Roux	Cooked until it turns a rich brown color, used for espagnole sauce. Ratio: Equal parts butter and flour.