



HOW TO FOLLOW A RECIPE

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Before You Begin

Recipes are guides to help you cook. Beginning cooks, have the best results when they use tested recipes from well-known cookbooks or other reliable sources such as this letter study course. Before you start:

- Make sure you have all the ingredients.
- Gather the equipment and ingredients together in one place.
- Always read a recipe from beginning to end before you start to cook.
- Wash your hands and clean your fingernails.

Parts of A Recipe

A recipe is usually made up of two parts--a list of ingredients and directions for combining ingredients to make the dish you are preparing. A well-written recipe lists ingredients in the order they will be added. Many recipes spell out how much of each ingredient to use. However, you may find the following abbreviations:

c means cup

t or tsp means teaspoon

T or Tbs means tablespoon

If the food is to be baked, the recipe will give you the size of the pan to use. It will also tell the baking temperature and give baking time. This time may need to be adjusted depending on the accuracy of your oven.

Terms Used in Cooking

Sometimes the methods described in a recipe can be confusing. Here are some common food preparation terms and their meanings.

Bake – To cook in an oven. When applied to meats in uncovered containers, it is generally called roasting.

Baste – To moisten the foods during cooking to add flavor and to prevent drying of the surface. The liquid is usually melted fat, meat drippings, fruit juice, sauce, or water.

Beat – To stir a mixture using rapid, regular motions, use a wire whisk, spoon, hand beater or mixer. Method incorporates air and makes mixture light, fluffy or smooth.

Blend – To mix two or more ingredients thoroughly.

Boil – To cook in a liquid that is at boiling temperature. Bubbles will rise continually and break on the surface.

Bread – To coat a food with bread or cracker crumbs or other food. The surface may first be coated with beaten egg or other liquid.

Broil – To cook by direct heat on a rack or spit.

Brown – To cook food with moderate or high heat until brown in color.

Chop – To cut into pieces with a knife or other sharp tool, blender, or food processor.

Coat – To spread food with or dip it into a substance such as flour or a sauce until it is covered.

Combine – To stir two or more ingredients together until the mixture looks uniform.

Cream – To mix fat and sugar with a spoon or mixer until soft and smooth.

Cube – To cut food into small cubes.

Cut – To divide food with a knife or scissors.

Cut In – To mix fat throughout with dry ingredients using two knives or a pastry blender until fat has coated the dry ingredients. Pieces should be the size of peas.

Dice – To cut into small cubes.

Dredge – To cover or coat with flour or other fine substances such as bread crumbs or corn meal.

Fold – To combine one ingredient with another by gently turning the mixture with a spoon.

Fry – To cook in fat. A small amount of fat is used for pan-frying, sauteing, or stir-frying; deep-fat fried foods are submerged in fat.

Glaze – To coat with a glossy mixture that adds to flavor and appearance.

Grate – To produce pieces of a specific size by rubbing food (such as carrots or cheese) on a grater or chopping in a blender or food processor.

Grease – To rub the surface of a pan or dish with a small amount of fat to prevent food from sticking. Use a brush or a bit of waxed paper or use cooking spray.

Grill – To cook food on a rack with direct heat.

Macerate – To soak foods in a liquid to soften them and to absorb flavor.

Marinate – To let food stand in a liquid.

Mince – To chop or cut into very small pieces.

Pare – To cut off the outside covering such as skins of vegetables or fruits.

Peel – To remove the outer covering of foods such as oranges or bananas.

Pinch – The amount of a substance that can be held between the thumb and forefinger and is smaller than $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon.

Reduce – To decrease volume of liquid by rapidly boiling.

Roast – To cook uncovered in an oven.

Saute – To cook in a small amount of fat.

Scald – To heat liquid to just below the boiling point.

Score – To cut shallow slits on the surface of food.

Simmer – To cook food over low heat in a liquid just below the boiling point. Bubbles will form slowly and break apart just below the surface.

Steam – To cook food in steam over boiling water in a closed container.

Stew – To simmer food in a liquid.

Stir – To mix ingredients with a circular motion.

Stir-fry – To fry thinly sliced food quickly in only a little oil, continuously stirring with a tossing motion.

Toast – To brown by direct heat or in a hot oven.

Toss – To mix foods lightly with a lifting motion.

Whip – To beat food to incorporate air and increase volume.

Sources: Adventures with Food, 4-H Bulletin 460, The Ohio State University, 1995. American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Handbook of Food Preparation, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1993.