

BASIC FOOD SKILLS

Document developed by Mapleton Teaching Kitchen 2011



TIPS & RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY FOOD MENTORS

SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN

TO PREVENT ANY ACCIDENTS in the kitchen...follow these tips..

1. Clean up any spills right away. Wash any utensil that falls on the floor before using it again.



2. Keep drawers, cupboard doors & the oven door closed at all times, so you don't bump or bang into them.

3. Baggy clothes or sleeves could catch fire around the stove or get caught up in kitchen equipment, so roll your sleeves up well.

4. Turn pot & pan handles towards the back of the stove so you don't bump into them when you walk by.

5. Make sure your hands are DRY when you plug in or unplug any electrical equipment.

6. Always use a sharp knife. A dull knife requires more pressure and may slip.



7. Always cut on a proper cutting surface. Use a non-slip mat or damp cloth under a cutting board to stop it from slipping around while you are chopping food.

8. When you lift the cover off a hot pot, use an oven mitt and lift the lid away from you so that the steam goes to the back and not into your face.



9. When you are carrying a knife in the kitchen always hold it by your side, firmly by the handle with the tip pointing down.

10. After you use a knife, carry it towards the sink & lay it on the counter beside the sink to be washed. NEVER put a knife in the sink!! Someone could cut themselves badly.



11. If a knife starts to fall off the counter, step back, DO NOT try & catch it before it hits the floor

12 Always use POTHOLDERS or OVEN MITTS when handling hot pots, pans or taking anything out of the oven. Do NOT use dish towels or dish cloths.

13. Use only MICROWAVE SAFE Cookware in the microwave, NEVER use aluminum foil or anything metal. Look for a microwave safe label.



HOW TO USE A CHEF'S KNIFE

- Understanding how to hold a chef's knife properly is 80% of using it safely.
- Grip the knife at the base of the blade. Pinch the blade between your thumb & index finger – the way you might hold a credit card out to someone.
- The other 20% of safety lies in how you hold the food being cut.
- Grip the food with the tips of your fingers slightly curled under (like a claw). Your fingers will act as a guide for the knife.
- The only thing that changes is the type of cut you use:
 - You can either drag the knife towards you with the blade tip and the point touching the board the whole time when you are slicing through a food,
 - Or you can rock the knife back and forth on the curved surface of the knife's tip, using the back edge or "heel" of the blade to do most of the cutting.
 - To dice or mince the food, keep the same grip on the knife and place your other hand flat on top of the knife. Rock the knife back & forth over the food with the tip staying on the board.



HOW TO USE A PARING KNIFE

A "paring" knife is a much smaller knife with a blade that is between 2 ½ and 4 inches long. For many it is the most used knife in the kitchen.

- Used for peeling fruit and vegetables
- Cutting or slicing small foods like garlic, berries etc.
- Mincing small items like garlic
- Removing the skin from onions, citrus fruits, etc.
- Detailed or controlled cutting



HOW TO PEEL

- Open your right hand flat and lay the paring knife diagonally across your fingers with the blade facing in. Close your hand around the handle with your index finger wrapping around the top edge of the knife's handle.



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- Hold the apple in your left hand (or right if you are a left handed) Your right thumb also holds the apple as you begin to push the knife along the inside of the flesh.
- Now your thumb becomes your knife's guide. Your thumb moves around the apple as your left hand turns the apple. Always keep your thumb ahead of the blade to protect yourself from being cut.



Visit <http://queencleopatra.hubpages.com/hub/paring-knife---different-kinds-of-knife> for lots more information on knives and a video on how to use a paring knife.

SLICING AND DICING: Recipe Cutting Terms



Chop: means to cut foods with a sharp knife or a food processor into fine, medium or coarse pieces. Often recipes will tell you if a certain size piece is needed. A serrated knife is the best choice for chopping tomatoes.



Cube: means to cut food into pieces all the same size usually about ½ inch (1/3cm) on all sides.



Dice: means to cut food into smaller pieces all the same size, usually about ¼ inch (0.65cm) on all sides. Use two steps to dice or cube. First make all you cuts going in one direction, then turn the cutting board or the food and make the crosscuts.



Julienne: means to cut food into thin match like sticks about 2 inches (5cm) long.



Mince: means to cut food into the tiniest pieces possible. Garlic is often minced and can also be done with a garlic press or a fine grater.



Slice: means to cut food into flat thin pieces

MEASURING TIPS

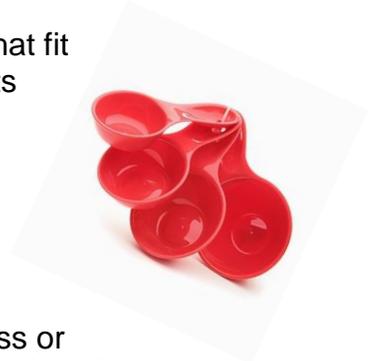
It is important to measure ingredients correctly to get good results when following a recipe. You will need to know:

- The right tools to measure
- How to measure correctly
- Some ingredients need different measuring methods
- Measuring short forms and amounts that are equal

The Right Tools

Dry Measuring Cups: These are often plastic or metal cups that fit one inside the other. They are used to measure dry ingredients like flour or sugar or soft solids like margarine.

Dry measures are available in: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50ml), $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (75ml), $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125ml), $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150ml), $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175ml), and 1 cup (250ml) sizes.



Liquid Measuring Cups: These are clear glass or plastic cups with measurement markings painted on the outside. They have a handle and spout or lip to make pouring easy.

Liquid measures will hold 1 cup (250ml), 2 cups (500ml) or 4 cups (1L)



Measuring Spoons: Measuring spoons usually come in a set. They can be used to measure dry or liquid ingredients.

Spoons come in sizes that measure: $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon (.5ml) $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1ml), $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2ml), 1 teaspoon (5ml), and 1 tablespoon (15ml).

How to Measure

Dry Ingredients:

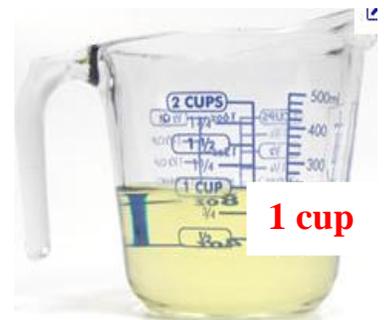
- a. Spoon the ingredients into the measuring cup.
- b. Level off any extra with the straight edge of a knife or spatula.



Liquid Ingredients:

1. Place the liquid measuring cup on a level surface.
2. Bend down so your eye is the level with the markings of the cup.
3. Fill the cup to the right level.

When measuring 1 tablespoon (15ml) or less, fill the appropriate measuring spoon to the top without letting it spill over.



Measuring ingredients



Brown sugar

Press brown sugar firmly into a dry measuring cup so that it holds the shape when it is turned out.

Butter or Shortening



- One pound (454g) of butter or shortening is equal to 2 cups (500ml). Often the wrapper has measurement lines you can cut through using a sharp knife.
- When butter is soft, use a dry measure and remove the excess with a knife.
- When butter is in **hard**, irregular shaped pieces, use this **easy “displacement” method**: Fill a 2-cup (500 mL) liquid measuring cup (the kind with a spout, handle and graduated measures marked on the side) with water to the 1 cup (250 mL) mark. Then add enough butter pieces until the level of the water reaches the amount of butter required when all of the butter is submerged (you may have to poke it down with a knife). For example, when 1/4 cup (50 mL) butter is required, the level should reach 1-1/4 cups (300 mL), for 1/3 cup (75 mL) butter, the level should reach 1-1/3 cups (325 mL), etc. Drain off the water and you’re left with your measured amount of butter



Semi Liquid ingredients

Semi liquid ingredients like margarine, sour cream, yogurt & peanut butter are measured in dry measuring cups because they are too thick to be accurately measured in liquid cups. Spoon these ingredients into the measure, pressing well and level off the top with the edge of a flat knife

Flour

- Slowly pour the flour into a measuring cup for dry ingredients or measuring spoon. Do not shake the flour so that it reaches the bottom. Equalize by means of a knife or a spatula.
- If the recipe requires the use of sifted flour, sift it over a measuring cup placed on a plate or a sheet of waxed paper, then tap the cup.
- Most of the time you will not have to sift flour.

Measurement Short Forms

cup = c

teaspoon = tsp

Tablespoon = Tbsp

pound = lb

ounce = oz

litre = l or L

millilitre = ml or mL

gram = g

kilogram = kg

Pinch = very small amount, the amount you can hold between your thumb & your index finger



How to Work Measurements Out

1 cup = 8 oz16 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup = 4 oz.....8 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup = 2 oz.....4 Tbsp

1 Tbsp = 3 teaspoons

2 cups = 16 oz = 1 pint

2 pints = 32 oz = 1 quart

4 quarts = 128 oz = 1 gallon

Most Often Used METRIC Measurements

¼ tsp = **1 ml**

1/3 cup = **75 ml**

½ tsp = **2 ml**

½ cup = **125 ml**

1 tsp = **5 ml**

2/3 cup = **150 ml**

1 Tbsp = **15 ml**

¾ cup = **175 ml**

1 cup = **250 ml**



Weight measures

8 oz = ½ lb = **250 g**

16 oz = 1 lb = **500g**

2 lbs = 1000g or **1 Kg**

Oven Temperature Guide

Low Heat	300°F = 150°C 325°F = 160°C
Medium Heat	350 F = 180 C 375 F = 190 C
High Heat	400 F = 200 C 425 F = 220 C
Very High Heat	450 F = 230 C 475 F = 240 C 500 F = 260 C

READING A RECIPE

- A recipe is set of instructions for preparing a certain food or drink and although they can be written in different forms, they usually follow the same guidelines:
- Recipe Title or Name: can include a description of the recipe like “healthy tropical smoothie”.
- Servings or Portions: How many portions the recipe makes & sometimes the size of the portion.
- Time: Tells you how long it takes to prepare the recipe & sometimes includes cooking time
- Ingredients: A list of items you will need to prepare the recipe.



A recipe may say “optional” beside an ingredient which means it is not critical but can be added for extra flavour or to make the recipe a little different.

Ingredients can be without a specific measurement as in “salt to taste” or a “pinch” of salt or a certain spice.

The ingredient might be listed with certain instructions of what you need to do with it before using it in the recipe. “One egg beaten” or “1 cup carrots – grated.”

- Directions or Method: The steps you need to take to make the recipe must be followed in the order they are given. Preheating the oven is often the first step.
- Serving Suggestions: Ways to serve the food you are preparing or other foods to serve alongside it.
- Nutritional Analysis: Will tell you the number of calories & other nutrients per serving.



COOKING TIPS

Glass dishes (or) metal containers

- If you use glass dishes rather than metal containers for food, lower the temperature to 25 ° F (10 ° C).

Oven racks

- Bake your cakes, muffins and cookies on the middle rack.
- Cook your yeast breads and pies on the bottom rack.

Verification of bakery products

- Always check how your product is cooked 5 to 10 minutes before end of cooking time suggested.
- Place a toothpick in the center of your cake, pudding or your muffins. It is clean when you removed, the cooking is completed.
- The cake will pull away from the side of the container when they finished cooking. If you grease the content, only do it for the background. You will get more volume.

Ingredients

- Use large eggs in your recipes, unless it is otherwise specified.
- Use white all-purpose flour, unless it is otherwise specified.

UNDERSTANDING RECIPE COOKING TERMS

Bake: To cook food covered or uncovered in the oven. Often used to cook cakes, cookies, muffins, and many desserts, casseroles and breads.

Baste: to moisten meat or other food during cooking by pouring some liquid over it. This adds flavour and prevents dryness.

Beat: to make a mixture smooth by stirring quickly with a spoon, fork, wire, whisk, rotary beater or electric mixer.

Blanch: To cook a small amount in boiling water or steam. Most often used for fruits or vegetables. It will set color and flavour and help loosen skins of things like tomatoes and peaches.

Blend: to mix two or more ingredients by hand, or with an electric mixer or blender, until smooth.

Boil: To cook food in liquid at a temperature that causes bubbles to form in the liquid.

Bouillon: A bouillon cube is a compressed cube of a dehydrated beef, chicken, fish, or vegetable stock. Bouillon granules are small particles of the same substance. Both can be added to hot liquid to make broth.

Braise: To cook a slight amount just to brown slightly. Used before baking and stewing.

Broil: To cook food just below a source of heat.

Broth or Stock: The liquid in which meat, poultry, fish or vegetable has been simmered.

Brown: To cook food in a skillet, broiler, or oven until it is lightly brown on the outside.

Carve: To cut or slice cooked meat into serving size pieces.

Chill: To cool foods to below room temperature- best done in the refrigerator.

Chop: To cut food into small pieces.

Coat: to evenly cover food with crumbs, flour, or a batter.

Cooking Oil: Liquid at room temperature, made from vegetables, nuts or seeds. Common types are canola, sunflower, peanut, and olive. For baking do not substitute oil for solid fat.



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Cream: To beat one or more foods until soft and creamy.

Curry Paste: A blend of herbs, spices and hot chillies that is often used in Indian and Thai cooking.

Cut in: To work a solid fat, such as shortening, butter or margarine, into dry ingredients. This can be done with a pastry blender or food processor, two knives or fingertips.

Dash: Is a very small amount of seasoning added to food. It is often used for liquid like hot pepper sauce.

Dissolve: To stir a solid food and liquid food together to form a mixture in which none of the solid remains. It often involves heating the liquid.

Dot: To scatter small pieces of butter, on top of foods before cooking.

Dredge: To sprinkle or coat a food evenly to completely cover. Often flour is used to dredge meat before cooking in a stew or stir fry.

Fillet: A piece of meat or fish that has no bones.

Flake: To gently break food into small, flat pieces. Fish will flake when cooked.

Fold: to combine ingredients such as beaten egg whites and sugar, with a gentle cutting motion, using a rubber spatula.

Grate: To rub food such as hard cheese or vegetables across a grated surface to make very fine pieces.

Grease: To coat a cooking utensil, such as a baking pan or skillet with a thin layer of fat or oil. You may also use a vegetable oil spray.

Knead: To work dough with the heels of your hands in a pressing and folding motion until it becomes smooth and elastic. This is often done when making bread.

Legumes: Dried beans, peas and lentils also known as pulses

Make a Well: Create a hollow space in the centre of dry ingredients before pouring in the wet ingredients.

Marble: To gently swirl one food into another. This is often done with light and dark batter for cakes or desserts.



Marinate: To soak a food in a liquid, usually an oil and acid like wine or vinegar, with seasonings. This adds flavour and makes food tender.

Mash: To press or beat a food to remove lumps and make smooth. This can be done with a fork, potato masher or electric mixer.

Mince: To cut very finely. Garlic is often minced in a recipe.

Parboil: To partially cook food by boiling.

Pare: To cut off the skin or outer covering of a fruit or vegetables, using a small paring knife or vegetable peeler.

Peel: Pare and peel can be used interchangeably. Peel also refers to outer covering of vegetable or fruit.

Pit: To remove the seed from fruit such as cherries and peaches.

Poach: To cook a food by completely submerging it in a simmering liquid.

Powdered Sugar: Also called confectioner's sugar or icing sugar.

Preheat: To heat an oven to a specific temperature before using.

Puree: to process or mash food until it is very smooth. This can be done using a blender, food processor or sieve.

Reduce: To thicken and improve flavour by boiling so that some of the liquid evaporates.

Sauté: To cook in a small amount of fat on top of the stove.

Scald: To heat a liquid, usually milk, to a point just below boiling.

Sear: To cook at very high heat for a very short time.

Season to taste: To add salt, pepper, herbs or spices to a dish so that it tastes the way you like it.

Shortening: A vegetable oil that has been processed into a solid form. It is most often used for baking or frying. Shortening should be stored in a cool dry place.

Shred: To push food across a shredding surface like a grate to make long narrow strips. Lettuce and cabbage can be shredded by thinly slicing them with a knife.



Shuck: To remove the shells from seafood such as oysters and clams or the husks from corn.

Sift: To put dry ingredients through a sieve/ strainer or sifter to remove any lumps.

Simmer: To cook a liquid, at low heat, to a point just below a full boil.

Skim: To remove a substance, such as fat or foam, from the surface of a liquid.

Steam: To cook on a rack or in a steamer basket over boiling water in a covered pan. Steaming retains flavour, shape, texture and nutrients better than boiling or poaching.

Stir Fry: A method of quickly cooking small pieces of food in a little hot oil in a wok or skillet over medium high heat, while stirring.

Stock: the strained clear liquid in which meat, poultry, fish or vegetables have been cooked with herbs or spices.

Toss: To mix ingredients lightly by lifting and dropping them using two utensils.

Yeast: The ingredient that uses sugar in dough to make it rise.

Zest: The colored outer rind of citrus fruits, like lemons, limes and oranges.



FOOD YIELDS

Apples	1 pound	3 medium= 3 cups slices
Bananas	1 pound	3-4 medium 1 ½ cups mashed= 2 cups sliced
Beans	1 pound	2-2 ½ cups (dry) =6 cups cooked
Bread crumbs	4 slices bread	2 cups fresh crumbs = 1 1/3 cups dry crumbs
Butter, margarine or shortening	1 pound	2 cups
Cabbage	1 pound	6 cups shredded= 2-3 cups cooked
Carrots	1 pound	3 cups shredded= 2-3 cups cooked
Cheese	4 ounces	1-1 1/3 cups shredded
Coffee	1 pound	40-50 cups brewed
Cornmeal	1 pound	3 cups (dry) = 12 cups cooked
Eggs (medium)	1 dozen	2 cups
Egg whites (large)	8 eggs	1 cup
Flour, all purpose	1 pound	4 cups sifted
Flour, whole wheat	1 pound	3 1/3 cup -3 ¾ cups
Graham Crackers	12 squares	1 cup crumbs
Ground meat (beef, Pork, turkey)	1 pound	2 cups ground (cooked)
Lemons	1 lemon	2-4 tablespoons juice
Macaroni, spaghetti	1 pound	5 cups (dry) = 8-10 cups cooked
Milk, evaporated	6 ounce can	1 ½ cups reconstituted
oatmeal	½ cup (dry)	1 cup cooked
Onions	1 pound	3 large
Oranges	orange	6 tablespoons juice
Potatoes	1 pound	3 medium= 3 ½ cups sliced =2 cups mashed
Raisins	1 pound	2 ¾ - 3 cups
Rice, regular white or brown	1 pound	2 ½ cups (dry) = 7 ½ cups cooked
Saltines	22 crackers	1 cup crumbs
Sugar, white-granulated	1 pound	2 cups
Sugar, brown	1 pound	2 ¼ cup (firmly packed)
Yeast (active dry)	1 packet	1 tablespoon)

From Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet, 1990, W.W. Norton & Co., Inc.
 This project is provided by the Family & Consumer Sciences division of Michigan

RECIPE SUBSTITUTIONS

Use the following table as a reference guide to help you make healthier substitutions for common ingredients in every day recipes. These substitute ingredients are lower in fat or calories, or both, as the original ingredients. Therefore, these substitutions significantly reduce the number of calories of the original ingredients. Many substitutions have little effect on the flavour.

- Instead of: 1 cup cream- Substitute 1 cup evaporated skim milk
- Instead of: 1 cup butter, margarine or oil- Substitute $\frac{1}{2}$ cup applesauce or other fruit + $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cup oil
- Instead of: 1 egg- Substitute 2 egg whites or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup egg substitute
- Instead of: pastry dough- Substitute: graham cracker crumbs or puff pastry
- Instead of butter, margarine or oil to fry food- Substitute: Vegetable oil spray, chicken or small amount of olive oil
- Instead of: bacon- Substitute: lean turkey bacon
- Instead of: sour cream- Substitute: fat free sour cream
- Instead of: 1 cup chocolate chips- Substitute: $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup miniature chocolate chips
- Instead of: 1 cup sugar- Substitute: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar (works with just about everything except yeast breads)
- Instead of: 1 cup mayonnaise- Substitute 1 cup of mayonnaise with low-fat or fat-free
- Instead of: 1 cup whole milk- Substitute 1 cup skim milk
- Instead of: 1 cup of cream cheese- Substitute $\frac{1}{2}$ ricotta cheese pureed with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fat-free cheese cream
- Instead of: salad dressing with oil and vinegar, three parts oil to one part vinegar- Substitute: a portion of olive oil + 1 part vinegar (preferably flavoured vinegar, such as balsamic vinegar) + 1 serving of orange juice