

## Mastering Healthy and Flavorful Cooking

Healthy cooking can be easy, fun and delicious with techniques that capture the flavor of food and increase the nutritional quality of meals. Food that is prepared using healthy cooking methods also retain more nutrients and reduce fat, salt and caloric intake.



### Dry Heat Cooking Methods

Dry heat cooking methods use hot air and heat typically from an oven, pan or grill to cook food.



#### BAKING & ROASTING

Roasting usually refers to cooking savory foods, like meats and vegetables, in an oven at 400°F or higher, while baking uses lower oven temperatures, typically 375°F.



#### BROILING

Broiling cooks food directly underneath very high heat, typically 500°F, for a short length of time in an oven.



#### GRILLING

Grilling refers to cooking either on an uncovered or covered grill, allowing hot air to circulate around the food.



#### SAUTÉING & STIR-FRYING

Sautéing and stir-frying cooks food over high heat on a stove while frequently stirring the food either in a skillet or Wok.



### Moist Heat Cooking Methods

Moist heat cooking methods use liquid or steam to cook food typically in a pot.



#### BOILING & BLANCHING

Both methods use boiling water to cook food. Blanching keeps food crispy by immediately plunging it into ice water after partially cooking in boiling water.



#### POACHING

Poaching cooks food by submerging it in simmering water until it is completely cooked.



#### STEAMING

Steaming cooks food with steam produced from water, typically using a colander (or strainer) to separate the food from the liquid.



#### BRAISING

Braising uses both dry and moist heat cooking methods. Start by pan searing over medium-high heat in a large pot or Dutch oven. Once browned, add liquid, cover and place in an oven at 325°F until fully cooked.



## Equipment

Having basic cooking equipment and tools will make your time in the kitchen easier and more enjoyable.

- Cutting knife
- Cutting board
- Can opener
- Measuring cups
- Mixing bowls
- Colander (or strainer)
- Non-stick skillet
- Small saucepan
- Large pot or Dutch oven
- Baking sheet
- Stirring spoons
- Oven mitts
- Food thermometer
- Storage containers
- Wok



## Adding Flavor

Getting creative with different flavors can enhance even the simplest dishes.

- **Marinate.** Place raw meat in a resealable bag with a low-sodium marinade for 2-6 hours depending on the size of the meat. For larger cuts, like whole roasts, try soaking overnight.
- **Encrust.** Coat fish and lean cuts of chicken, beef, pork and lamb with ground nuts (e.g. pecans, walnuts) or seeds (e.g. sesame seeds, flax seeds).
- **Use herbs and spices.** Rub a mixture of fresh or dried herbs and spices on raw meat or add to the pan or skillet once cooking.
- **Baste.** When roasting or grilling, brush low-sodium broths, marinades or cooking juices onto vegetables, fish and lean cuts of chicken and turkey every 15-45 minutes.
- **Add seasoning vegetables.** Add fresh garlic, green peppers or a mix of seasoning vegetables such as chopped celery, onions and carrots to food while cooking.
- **Smoke.** Use a cedar wood plank to infuse a smoky wood flavor to fish, meat and vegetables when baking or grilling. Foods can also be smoked using a smoker placed on low heat.
- **Deglaze.** Use vegetable broth, wine, pureed tomatoes, vinegar or a combination of cooking liquids to loosen browned meat and vegetables from saucepans and skillets.
- **Add salsa.** Smother lean cuts of beef, pork and lamb in red or green salsa.
- **Use citrus.** Squeeze lime, lemon and orange juice into marinades, on food while cooking, into boiling water to release the flavor in the steam or onto food once it's finished cooking to add freshness and tenderize meat.



## Cooking Temperatures

Using healthy cooking methods to prepare meals can be a great way to cultivate a healthy lifestyle. To enjoy a safe and flavorful meal, please follow the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recommended minimum internal cooking temperatures for meat and poultry.

Beef, pork, veal and lamb
145°F

Ground beef, pork, veal and lamb
145°F

Fish
160°F

Eggs
160°F

Turkey, chicken and duck
165°F