

A TO Z GUIDE OF
cooking tips!





Asparagus:

To find the tender part of the spear, gently bend until it breaks. The natural breaking point will separate the tender part from the rest.



Baking Powder:

To check freshness: Add one teaspoon of baking powder to one-third cup of water. If the water does not fizz it's old, and you should toss it.



Baking Dishes:

To remove a baked-on mess from your baking pan, fill it with water, drop in a dryer sheet and let soak overnight. The mess will be easy to remove the next morning.



Cilantro:

To store: Clean and dry the fresh cilantro. Put in a zippered bag and store in the freezer. You will find it is nearly as fresh as before when you need it.



Citrus Fruit for Juicing:

To increase the amount of juice, roll the fruit on the counter and put it in the microwave for 10-20 seconds, depending upon the size of the fruit.



Citrus Zest:

Before you squeeze juice from a lemon or lime, grate the rind into a freezer bag and freeze. When a recipe calls for lemon or lime zest, just pull it from the freezer.



Cooking:

If you're cooking for someone important — whether it's your boss or a date — never try a new recipe or new ingredient.



Corn on the Cob:

1. Place ear of corn in the microwave and cook on high for two minutes; flip it over and cook on high until kernels are hot and steaming, another two minutes.
2. Place corn ear on a cutting board using a pot holder or folded kitchen towel and cut off the bottom of the ear, exposing 1/4 to 1/2-inch of kernels. Hold the top and squeeze the ear out of the husk from top to bottom. Husks and silk will be left behind.
3. Season to taste.



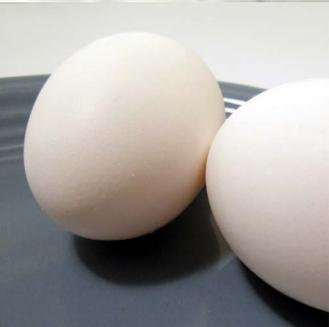
Corn on the Cob Two:

1. Clean corn of silks.
2. Wash and wrap in plastic wrap while wet.
3. Microwave on high for eight minutes.
4. Cut from the cob or serve on the cob.



Dressings:

For rich creamy dressing made healthy, substitute half the mayo with Greek-style yogurt.



Eggs:

For perfect hard boiled eggs cover them with cold water in sauce pan and bring to a rapid boil. Turn off heat and cover with tight fitting lid and let stand for 10 minutes. Rinse with cold water.



Fish:

Season fish simply. The flavor of the fish is what you want. When it comes off the grill or out of the oven or pan, finish it off with a little squeeze of fresh lemon juice. Always. There is just something about lemon and fish that is wonderful. And remember -- fish should never smell fishy.



Fried Rice:

Use leftovers for delicious fried rice, soup or a hearty stew. Use cold rice that is one or two days old. First, fry the meat and vegetables in oil. Next add the rice and condiments and spices of your choice.



Garlic:

Peeling garlic can be a pain. Microwave garlic cloves for about 10 seconds -- too long and they will lose flavor. Try it a couple of times, and you will get the hang of it. This trick will make the garlic cloves slide out easy.



Ginger:

To store: Grate or chop fresh peeled ginger then store in the freezer in a zippered bag. It freezes beautifully. You can also peel fresh ginger and keep it in the freezer whole, which will make it easier to grate.



Herbs:

Use a coffee grinder for chopping dried herbs and sturdy fresh herbs. Fresh rosemary and thyme work well.



Honey:

One cup of white sugar equals three-fourths of a cup of honey.



Ice Cream:

Ice cream should be stored at zero to minus 10 degrees Fahrenheit to maintain its texture.



Juice:

A little seltzer added to stale fruit juice will refresh the taste.



Kale:

Kale is available year-round though it is most flavorful and abundant in the winter. Kale can be kept in the refrigerator for just a few days since it becomes bitter very quickly.



Lemon:

Rub your hands with salt and lemon juice to remove fish odors.



Mandolin:

A mandolin slices firm vegetables such as potatoes, carrots and cabbage into julienne strips, french fries, waffle cuts, etc. It is a great kitchen tool, and you do not need an expensive one.



Nuts:

Nuts can go bad quickly because of their high oil content. You can store them in a cool and dry place for a couple of days or in the refrigerator for several weeks. They should be frozen if you're going to keep them for any longer.



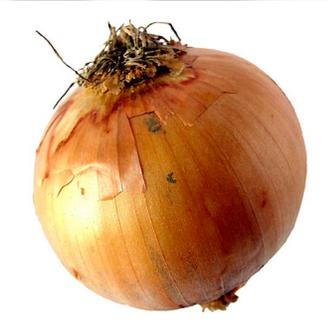
Oil:

If you find you need more oil in the pan when sautéing, add it in a stream along the edge of the pan so the oil will be heated by the time it reaches the ingredient being cooked.



Oil Two:

Want to know if your oil is hot enough for frying? Stick a wooden skewer or spoon in it. If bubbles form around the wood you are good to go.



Onions:

Anytime you make salsa with raw onions, and you are not going to eat it within the next 20 minutes or so, be sure to rinse the diced onions under cold running water first then blot dry or soak them in vinegar for about 20 minutes. This will rid them of sulfurous gas that can ruin fresh salsa. Same for guacamole.



Pasta:

Do **not** put oil in the water when boiling pasta since it will keep the sauce from sticking to the cooked pasta.



PLU:

PLU stands for **price look-up** code. The code for organic produce starts with the number nine and is five digits long. (The one for conventional produce is just four digits.)

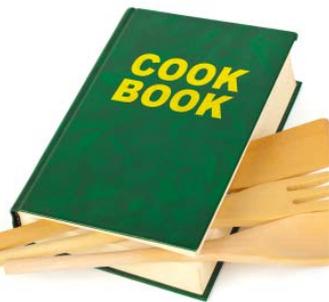
Preparation:

Prep is key. Take away the stress by doing the prep for a lunch or dinner party the day before. That way you will enjoy the party.



Quinoa:

Quinoa, pronounced KEEN-wah, is a seed, not a grain. Rinse it well before cooking, do not overcook (simmer 15 minutes), drain thoroughly and then let it rest for 15 minutes. Voila. Perfect quinoa.



Recipes:

Recipes are only a guideline. Be creative. Feel free to replace ingredients with something similar if you prefer.



Skim Fat:

When removing fat from a hot sauce, stew or soup, simply fold a paper towel and dip it in the top of the mixture. Repeat as necessary. Another option is to drop an ice cube in the pot for just a few seconds. The ice will attract the fat like a magnet. Scoop it out immediately with a slotted spoon.



Slicing Fresh Mozzarella:

In addition to using an egg slicer to slice fresh mushrooms, it is also perfect for slicing fresh mozzarella. The cheese won't move around as much, and it is easy to create even slices.



Tomatoes:

1. Do not keep fresh tomatoes in the fridge. They are a fruit, so keep them in a cool place away from heat and light to continue ripening and fully develop their flavor.

2. They should not be cooked in an aluminum pot or pan. Aluminum makes cooked tomatoes taste bitter and fades the color.
3. Cut tomatoes with a serrated bread knife to make neat slices and avoid squeezing out the juices.

Using Oils:

Use good oil when cooking. Smell and taste it. If it doesn't taste good alone, it won't taste good in your food.

Vanilla:

Always use pure vanilla extract rather than imitation. It is more expensive, but the flavor is superior and you need less since it is more intense.

Vinaigrette:

Make your own vinaigrettes. They taste better than bottled salad dressing. No need to whisk them: Just put all the ingredients in a sealed container and shake.

Watercress:

Watercress is highly nutritious, tastes great in salads and makes a great soup. With deep green leaves and crisp, paler stems, watercress is related to mustard and is one of the strongest-tasting salad leaves available.



Xigua:

Xigua is an edible fruit that is similar to a watermelon. Both contain as much iron as spinach plus many other vitamins & minerals.



Yams:

Serve this tasty, nutritious and super-versatile veggie year-round in recipes from quick breads to fries.



Zoodles:

Zoodles are noodles made from zucchini. They are easy to make and a healthy alternative for pasta. Here is how you do it:

1. Wash the zucchini and then julienne. A julienne peeler works well.
2. Place zoodles in a mesh strainer, liberally salt and let sit for 20 minutes. (This step is crucial.)
3. Rinse the zoodles with cold water, drain and pat dry.
4. Add a splash of olive oil to a warm sauté pan, heat the oil and sauté some garlic until it's fragrant. Then add the zoodles and sauté for three to four minutes.
5. Top with Parmesan or your favorite pasta sauce.
6. Enjoy!

Visit

*Operation Live Well
online for more healthy tips,
resources and recipes*



militaryonesource.mil/olw
health.mil/livewell



[OperationLiveWell](#)



[@DOD_OLW](#)



[OpLiveWell](#)



[OperationLiveWell](#)

OPERATION

★ **Live Well** ★

Your Health Is Our Best Defense