

# The Ultimate Kitchen Guide



**How-Tos, Cooking Tips & Essential  
Kitchen Knowledge**

## ***The Ultimate Kitchen Guide: How-Tos, Cooking Tips & Essential Kitchen Knowledge***

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## Letter from the Editors

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Dear Cooking Enthusiast:

We love creating eCookbooks full of amazing, quick and easy recipes, but what about all the basic kitchen tips and tricks that make everything go smoothly? RecipeLion and friends put our heads together and collected our best how-tos and cooking tips for you! In *The Ultimate Kitchen Guide: How-Tos, Cooking Tips & Essential Kitchen Knowledge*, you'll find a wealth of knowledge to make every home cook more skilled and efficient.

Maybe you want to learn to cook, or perhaps you're experienced in the kitchen and just looking for some new techniques to perfect. No matter what your skill level, we're willing to bet there are cooking tips in this collection that will change the way you think about cooking and baking. Whether you're curious about certain dietary restrictions, love to find new baking tricks, or want to make the homemade version of a certain ingredient, this collection is for you.

We've included handy printable guides to hang on your refrigerator, tutorials for how to make everything better, and much more. Armed with the tips and tricks in this book, you'll become a kitchen connoisseur in no time.

For more quick and easy recipes, be sure to visit [RecipeLion.com](http://RecipeLion.com). While you're there, subscribe to our free newsletter, [Quick and Easy Recipes](#), to get free recipes delivered to your inbox every week.

Happy Cooking!

Sincerely,

*The Editors of RecipeLion and Friends*

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## Kitchen How-Tos:

### How to Organize Your Refrigerator

By: [The Editors of AllFreeCasseroleRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsOfAllFreeCasseroleRecipes.com)

"Out of sight and out of mind" is a phrase that aptly describes the chaos that plagues most refrigerators. Even if you keep a tidy house and your kitchen is so clean it sparkles, your refrigerator is undoubtedly harboring disorganization or spoiled food. However, learning how to organize your refrigerator effectively is easy, and it's even easier to maintain once you organize it once and for all. If you are looking for innovative tips and tricks to help you learn how to organize your refrigerator, then look no further than this guide for *How to Organize Your Refrigerator*.



#### **How to Organize Your Refrigerator**

Believe it or not, there is a correct place for certain items in your fridge. Adhering to a few rules and tips could help eliminate spoilage as well as disorganization. Follow these simple guidelines and suggestions to find out how to organize your refrigerator and how to get the most out of this hardworking appliance.

1. Eggs should not be kept in the door but in the center of the middle shelf. This particularly cold spot will help keep your eggs fresh.

2. Dairy should never be kept in the door, which tends to be warmer, but on the bottom shelf where it is coldest. This includes milk, cottage cheese, sour cream, and yogurt.
3. Certain items do not need to be kept as cold, so they are well-suited for storage in the door. Such items include butter, soft cheeses, condiments, pickles, and salsa.
4. You should never mix fruit, vegetables, and deli meats in the same drawer. This can lead to spoilage because these items have different humidity and temperature requirements. Fruit should be kept in a drawer with low humidity, such as the crisper. Vegetables do well in a drawer with higher humidity. Deli meats and cheeses should be kept in their own drawer, which is generally slightly cooler than the rest of the fridge. If you do not have a deli drawer, store these meats and cheeses on the bottom shelf.
5. Raw meats should be kept on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator because it is coldest. It will also prevent the uncooked items' juices from dripping and contaminating the other food in the refrigerator if they leak.
6. Store all food and leftovers in clear containers. This will help you easily identify what you have and will encourage you to eat the leftovers.
7. Good air circulation is vital to keeping your food cold and fresh. Avoid overcrowding your refrigerator, which will restrict circulation and lead to spoilage.
8. Keep one shelf generally clear at all times for cooked and prepared foods. This way, you will always have a place to put tomorrow's lunches or items that have been prepped for dinner. You will also always know that there is space readily available should need to chill something, such as dough or a cake.
9. Always look in your fridge before going grocery shopping. This will give you an opportunity to toss expired items and will also prevent you from buying items that are already stocked in your fridge. Being aware of what you have at all times will help prevent wasting both food and money.
10. Reorganize the shelves in the fridge in whatever manner makes sense to you so that you can maximize your own space.
11. Clean your refrigerator regularly and whenever anything spills. You can also line the shelves with liners so that cleanup is easier and more efficient.

## How to Clean Your Slow Cooker

By: [The Editors of AllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofAllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com)

All good cooks know how vital it is to be aware of food and kitchen safety, both when considering how to prepare food and how to clean up once you are done cooking. This is just as true for your slow cooker as it is for any other kitchen appliance or preparation method. Read our tips below to find out quick and easy tricks on how to clean your slow cooker.



### Tips on How to Clean Your Slow Cooker

1. **Let the slow cooker do the work.** Unfortunately, slow cookers don't come with a self-cleaning feature. However, one of the easiest ways to clean the burnt-on food in your slow cooker is to fill the slow cooker with water, add a small amount of dish soap, put the cover on, and turn the cooker to the LOW setting for 2 to 3 hours. This will loosen all of the baked-on and burnt food so that you can easily wipe it away. Make sure to let the slow cooker cool before handling it.
2. **Take advantage of slow cooker liners.** You can find these convenient plastic liners in your grocery store. They fit easily into your slow cooker and are food-safe, so you can feel confident in using them. After you finish using your slow cooker, simply dispose of the liner. Even though you used a liner, be sure to still wipe the inside of your slow cooker with a clean cloth in order to prevent any accidental contamination.
3. **Never submerge the base of your slow cooker.** Wipe the slow cooker base clean with a sponge or clean cloth and warm, soapy water. You should never put the base in the sink or submerge it in water.
4. **Wash the slow cooker's lid in the dishwasher.** In order to prevent warping, plastic lids should be washed on the top rack. Glass lids are also generally dishwasher safe. You



may also be able to put the slow cooker's removable insert (the pot in which the food sits) in the dishwasher, but always check with your manufacturer before doing so.

5. **Before putting food in the slow cooker, spray the interior with cooking spray.** Using cooking spray will help your finished food come out easier. You will still have some cleanup, but the cooking spray will make it significantly easier.
6. **Clean the slow cooker pot while it is still warm.** This will make the mess easier to remove because it won't get the chance to become caked-on. Adding hot water to the slow cooker while it is warm will also help loosen any grime that remains. Always use hot water when the pot is still warm; cold water could cause your slow cooker to crack from the rapid change in temperature.
7. **Never use abrasive cleaning solvent or scouring pads.** This could damage or scratch the finish on your ceramic insert.
8. **Soak your slow cooker insert just like you would any other pot.** Even if your pot has cooled and is now sporting a caked-on, burnt-on mess, all is not lost. Soaking the slow cooker insert with hot water and dish soap will always help you get your slow cooker back to its sparkling self in no time.

## [Leftover Storage Tips](#)

By: [The Editors of The Mr. Food Test Kitchen](#)

The Mr. Food Test Kitchen shares their own food safety and refrigerator leftover storage tips! This easy-to-read chart ensures your own holiday leftovers will be wrapped and put away to be safely enjoyed a second time.

1. No food should be allowed to sit out at room temperature for more than two hours (see Note).
2. Place food into shallow containers, divvying leftovers into smaller or personal-sized portions, and immediately put in the refrigerator or freezer for rapid cooling.
3. Foods must be kept covered in a refrigerator at the proper safe temperature zone of 38 to 40 degrees F.

Product	Refrigerator Storage Times
Ham, fully cooked	3 to 4 days
Turkey, fully cooked	2 days
Cooked meat & meat casseroles	3 to 4 days
Gravy & meat broth	1 to 2 days
Cooked poultry casseroles	3 to 4 days
Poultry pieces, plain	3 to 4 days
Poultry pieces in broth or gravy	1 to 2 days
Pizza, cooked	3 to 4 days
Stuffing, cooked, outside a bird	1 to 2 days
Cold-cut trays	3 days
Mashed potatoes	1 to 2 days
Cranberry sauce	7 days
Sweet potatoes, cooked	7 days
Pumpkin pie	2 to 3 days
Eggnog	4 to 5 days after "Sell by" Date

## [Glass Pans vs. Metal Pans: Which are Better for Baking?](#)

By: [The Editors of AllFreeCasseroleRecipes.com](#)

Ultimately, no matter what you are making, you want it to cook as evenly and as perfectly as possible. For this, you need the right pan. After all, you wouldn't use a cupcake pan to make a casserole, or a cookie sheet to make a cobbler. AllFreeCasseroleRecipes is giving you the how-to guide for glass and metal pans and bake ware.

### **Which pans are better for baking at high temperatures?**

If you are looking to bake or cook something at a high temperature and for a shorter period of time, then metal pans are the choice for you. Metal is a great conductor of heat, which means it gets hot very quickly. For this reason, metal pans are perfect for cooking things like biscuits and meats. If you are using the broil setting on your oven, make sure to use a metal pan. A glass pan cannot handle the quick changes in heat and might shatter. So if you want the top of your casserole to be delicious and golden brown, use a metal pan and you will see just which pans are better for baking at high temperatures.

### **Which pans are better for baking for long periods of time?**

Glass pans take longer to heat up than metal ones. They are therefore better for baking foods that take longer times to cook. If you are baking a cake or a large casserole, you might want to use a glass pan. When you use glass pans however, be sure to extend your baking time by a few minutes to make up for the lower temperatures of the oven. Glass is also better for baking and cooking foods with high acidity such as lemons or vinegar. Sometimes, these foods can react with the finish or coating of metal pans and turn your food into a color that is less than appetizing.

There are ultimately very few rules when it comes to baking and cooking. But, knowing which types of baking pans are better for your recipes is essential for having the best outcome. Both glass and metal pans have their benefits and drawbacks. Help ensure that your dish is the best possible quality by educating yourself about the utensils you are using. After all that learning, aren't you hungry for a snack?

## Cooking and Baking Tips and Tricks:

### 20 Tips for Making and Baking Great Cookies

By: [Editors of The Mr. Food Test Kitchen](#)

1. Always read a recipe completely before beginning, to be sure you understand the whole procedure. This will eliminate any surprises.
2. Gather all ingredients before beginning. Nobody wants to have to run to the store halfway through a recipe.
3. Unless specifically stated otherwise, ingredients are best when used at room temperature. This is true except in very hot kitchens.
4. The number of eggs called for in most recipes is based on U.S. graded large or extra-large eggs.
5. You can use butter or stick-type margarine unless otherwise instructed. Butter adds more flavor. If oversoftened, set it aside for other kitchen uses and use fresh for baking.
6. Mix dough evenly, making sure ingredients are combined uniformly. This is true except in recipes that state otherwise, such as marbled items.
7. Overmixing can cause cookie dough to harden, so do not overmix!
8. To prevent the motor on your portable hand mixer from burning out, pay attention to how hard it is working. Cookie doughs tend to be stiff. You can almost always stir in your final dry ingredients by hand if necessary.
9. For best results, grease pans as directed in each recipe. This will ensure easy removal of cookies.
10. Always preheat the oven. Putting an item into a cold oven will alter the baking time and the consistency of the finished product.



11. To allow for the most even heat circulation, it is best to bake cookies and bars in the center oven rack position. Also, do not overcrowd the oven. It will cause uneven baking, resulting in underbaked or burned cookies.
12. If baking two or more trays at the same time, it's best to place both pans into the oven at the same time, and switch the pans once during baking.
13. Never place raw cookie dough on a hot cookie sheet. If using the same cookie sheets for several batches, always allow them to cool between uses.
14. Always check cookies after the minimum suggested cooking time. Remember, cookies continue to bake after they're removed from the oven, so be careful not to overbake. A good rule of thumb is: Crispy, thin cookies are done if they're firm to the touch and golden around the edges. Thick or moist cookies are done when you can press them lightly with your finger and leave no imprint. Brownies and bars are done when they pull away slightly from the sides of the pan, or when firm to the touch with a little bounce (but not loose) when lightly pressed in the center.
15. Use a timer to help keep track of cooking time. It's easy to get distracted – and, if you do, your cookies can be overdone before you know it.
16. Always use pot holders or oven mitts when handling hot pans.
17. Place hot baking pans on a cooling rack to allow air to circulate completely around pans. This also helps prevent damage to countertops.
18. If cooled cookies stick to a cookie sheet, return the pan to a warm oven for about 1 minute, then immediately remove the cookies with a spatula.
19. Test your oven temperature regularly with an oven thermometer to ensure proper calibration. Oven thermometers are usually available in supermarket housewares sections, and also in most kitchen stores.
20. Clean up as you go along so that your time in the kitchen can be enjoyable and kept to a minimum!



## [Top 10 Tips for Baking Perfect Pies](#)

By: [The Editors of The Mr. Food Test Kitchen](#)

Have you ever wondered what the secrets are to baking the most amazing pies? It's true, pie baking can seem daunting but, once you've learned our best tips and tricks, you'll be cranking out perfect pies like a professional. Learn how to say "sayonara" to soggy pie crusts with our pie crust baking tips, choose the best thickener for your pies, and so much more!

### Tips for Pie Crusts:

1. **It starts with the pan** you're using. It's best to use a glass, dark or dull-metal baking pan. These types of pans are more neutral and will help allow your crust to brown evenly. A shiny pan or flimsy disposable pan won't let it brown enough.
2. **Don't let the edges burn.** What to do when your crust over-browns? Cover the edges with aluminum foil after it bakes for 15 minutes, or use a purchased pie crust shield. If it's a double-crust pie, the edges need to be covered after 30 minutes.
3. **No one wants a soggy pie crust!** To prevent pie crust from getting soggy, you can try setting your pie pan on a baking sheet before putting it in the oven. Or, you can seal your pie crust by brushing it with a slightly beaten egg white. Refrigerate your pie crust in its pan for 15 to 20 minutes before you fill it. Yet another method is to "blind bake" your crust. After lining your pan with your dough, line it with foil or parchment paper, then add pie weights -- dried beans or rice will both work, too. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until the crust turns golden. Let the crust cool and proceed with your recipe.
4. **Leftover pie dough scraps?** Don't throw them away! Sprinkle 'em with cinnamon-sugar, or go savory with grated Parmesan cheese. Pop 'em in the oven and bake until golden, usually about 10 to 15 minutes.
5. **Creating a golden crust:** If you're using a lattice or other double pie crust topping, brush the top with beaten egg, milk, or cream for a nicely browned crust.



**Tips for Pie Fillings:**

1. **Cornstarch or tapioca?** Both of these will thicken a pie filling. We like to use tapioca when baking pies containing fruits that are more acidic -- like cherry or apple. All-purpose flour is a popular choice for apple pies, too. Cornstarch is the best choice for anything dairy or cream-based.
2. **Is it done yet?** When baking a custard pie, you can test to see if it's done by inserting a knife into its center. If it comes out easily, the pie is set.
3. **Runny pie filling?** You may not have baked it long enough for it to set. Pop it back in the oven for 10 more minutes and check again.
4. **Time-saving shortcut:** If you want to use a pre-made filling, you won't need to bake your pie for as long. You'll just need enough time to bake the crust and warm the filling through.
5. **Prevent meringue from weeping:** Making a meringue-topped pie? If you are, be sure to spread the meringue over the filling completely while the filling is still warm. You also want to make sure you beat your egg whites enough while making your meringue, until they create stiff peaks.

Now it's time to put what you've learned into practice! Click here for a collection of [74 Easy Pie Recipes, Plus 5 Homemade Crusts!](#)

## [Cake Baking Secrets: Tips & Tricks for Baking Flawless Cakes](#)

By: [The Editors of The Mr. Food Test Kitchen](#)

Whether you're baking with cake mix or baking cakes from scratch, these helpful hints will save you both time and money in the kitchen. From sunken cakes to dry cakes, these tips and tricks will give you the knowledge you need to make perfect cakes every time.

If you want to become a cake baking pro, the first thing you'll want to do is check to make sure your oven is heating at the correct temperature. If you've ever experienced common cake baking problems such as a sunken or collapsed cake, this could be because your oven isn't getting as hot as it says it is. An oven that's too hot could cause a dry cake. Invest in an oven thermometer -- your cakes (and cake tasters) will thank you!

### General Tips & Tricks:

1. Cakes baked in glass versus metal bake differently. If using glass, you'll want to lower your oven temperature by 25 degrees.
2. Preheat your oven before you start mixing and prepping -- it's best if the oven is preheated for 20 to 30 minutes at the proper baking temperature.
3. Be sure to use the correct pan size called for in the recipe.
4. Fat, eggs, and liquid (eggs, butter, milk, etc.) should generally be used at room temperature. Cold ingredients could cause the batter to curdle.
5. When combining butter and sugar, take your time to cream them together -- beat or cream together for at least 5 minutes. This helps to ensure a lighter cake, as it adds tiny air pockets to the batter. Sugar granules shouldn't be visible, but you can still feel them if you rub a bit of the mixture between your fingers.
6. Measure flour and other dry ingredients exactly. Use a knife or other flat surface to level off dry ingredients in a measuring cup or spoon.
7. And don't skip the sifting! This step helps to add air and ensures that all dry ingredients are properly combined. If you don't have a sifter, you can use a wire mesh strainer.





8. When baking foam cakes like angel food cake, take great care when adding the flour to the beaten egg whites. Fold the flour in three stages, very gently so that you don't lose the airy volume of the egg whites -- this is what keeps the cake so light.
9. Generally, the cake batter should fill the pan by at least 1/2 and not more than 2/3, unless otherwise instructed.
10. Try to bake the cake in the middle of the oven and, if baking more than one cake at a time, don't crowd them together, or they will bake unevenly.
11. For crumb-free slices, run your knife under hot water and dry it before cutting into the cake.



### **Frosting Tips:**

1. Always wait for cakes to cool completely before frosting. Even the slightest warmth from a cake can quickly turn your frosting or icing into a mess.
2. Brush your cooled cake with a pastry brush (or your fingers if you don't have one) to remove excess crumbs.
3. Begin the frosting process by first applying a very thin layer of frosting to the cake. This is known as a "crumb coat." It will help to seal in the crumbs, and you can further help this process by refrigerating the cake for an hour or so at this point. The frosting will harden slightly and really hold in the crumbs. Now, you can frost as you normally would, starting with the top and finishing with the sides.
4. For a truly perfect presentation, wipe the spatula clean each time you swipe frosting onto the cake. You may want to spread it on smoothly for a clean finish, or you may opt to swirl it decoratively around the cake.

### **Common Problems & How to Avoid:**

1. **Dry Cake:** As mentioned above, this could be caused by an oven that's too hot. You may need to calibrate your oven or bake at a lower temperature. You may also have baked your cake for too long. Alternatively, a dry cake can be caused by too much flour or baking powder.

2. **Sunken Cake:** This can be caused by too much liquid, or an oven that's not hot enough. If the oven isn't hot enough, this could actually be a result of opening the oven door too many times while your cake is baking. In general, try to wait until the cake is nearly finished baking before you open the door.
3. **Difficulty Removing Cake from Pan:** Make sure to properly grease and flour the pan before you add the batter. You may also want to try lining the bottom of your pan with parchment paper, especially when baking layer cakes. Be sure to remove the cake from the pan at the right time; allow the cake to cool in the pan on a wire rack for 5 to 10 minutes, then invert it onto a plate or rack to remove it from the pan and allow it to cool completely.



**More Fun Facts & Substitutions:**

1. No cake flour on hand? You can substitute this by using regular all-purpose flour and cornstarch. For each cup needed, start by adding 2 tablespoons of cornstarch to a 1-cup measuring cup; fill the cup with all-purpose flour and level the top.
2. Self-rising flour is not to be used interchangeably with all-purpose flour. The difference is that self-rising flour has baking powder already in it. If you want to substitute all-purpose for self-rising, you can add 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon salt to 1 cup all-purpose flour.
3. To lower fat and calories in your cake, replace half of the oil with applesauce or yogurt. This will add moisture without adding fat.
4. Ever wonder why chocolate cake recipes call for boiling liquid to be added to the batter? The hot liquid helps to release the flavors of the chocolate.
5. If you're baking a layer cake and can't quite figure out how to divide the batter evenly between pans, you can stand a knife in each pan to see if the batter is measuring up to the same point.
6. Most cake recipes can easily be converted to cupcakes. The average cake recipe that would produce two 9-inch cakes should generally make enough batter for 24 to 36 cupcakes. Oven temperature should be kept the same, though baking time will change from anywhere between 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the recipe. You'll have to keep an eye on them.

## [How to Make a Watermelon Basket](#)

By: [The Editors of RecipeLion.com](#)

Summer is the time for swimming, sunbathing and eating summer foods like hot dogs, hamburgers and your favorite summertime melon; watermelon.

If you're like me, when you cut open a watermelon, you cut it down the middle and slice it into smaller pieces. That's a perfectly fine way to cut a watermelon, but if you want to get creative, try making your very own watermelon basket.



There are many things you can create out of a watermelon, including a jack-o-lantern, fish, flower or rabbit, but the ever-popular item is the fruit basket. The fruit basket is a fruit favorite and is the perfect food item to bring to backyard barbecues or parties.

Here are some pointers on how to make the ultimate fruit basket and how to carve a watermelon:

1. Choose an oblong watermelon and slice ¼ inch off the bottom lengthwise.
2. Use a pencil to draw lines for handle placement and basket opening. Cut the handle first, as wide as you'd prefer, then make zig-zag cuts with a paring knife, all the way through the rind.
3. Carefully remove the watermelon, cutting pieces into 3x3-inch squares and putting aside in bowl.
4. Use an ice cream scoop or spoon to carve out any remaining watermelon.

With those four simple steps you will not only know how to carve a watermelon, but you'll also know how to make a cute and trendy basket to put your fruit salad in.

Now that you know how to carve a watermelon and make a basket, perhaps you would like some fruit salad recipes you can fill your watermelon basket with.

## [How to Bake in Your Slow Cooker](#)

By: [The Editors of AllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofAllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com)

Learning how to bake in your slow cooker allows you to make great use out of an everyday appliance. It is also convenient to be able to bake in the slow cooker because it will allow you to prepare quick bread recipes, cakes, and other baked goods in the summer without turning on the oven and heating up the house. Baking in the slow cooker is also perfect for maximizing oven space and efficiency on busy baking days.

To get started on learning how to bake in your slow cooker, follow our tips below.



### **Tips on How to Bake in Your Slow Cooker**

1. Slow cookers often come with a baking insert that is perfect for utilizing your slow cooker's baking function. If you do not have these accessories, you can also use a coffee can or whatever size loaf pan that will fit inside your slow cooker. You can even make muffins in your slow cooker by placing paper liners inside mason jars.
2. Remember to grease your baking vessel before pouring in the batter. This will ensure a clean and easy release when the baked goods are done.
3. Only fill your baking vessel halfway. Just like in a normal oven, your baked goods will rise a significant amount.
4. It is important for the heat of the slow cooker to surround the food as it bakes. It is easy to do this by setting a baking rack on the bottom of a slow cooker, or by elevating the baking vessel on crumpled up balls of aluminum foil.

5. When baking in the cooker, it is important to trap the condensation that develops. You can do this by placing layers of paper towels directly over your baking vessel, or by lining the lid of the slow cooker with paper towels or a dish cloth. You can also slightly prop the slow cooker's lid to allow steam to escape.
6. Use the high setting when baking in your slow cooker. Also be sure to preheat the slow cooker, just like you would a normal oven.
7. Only lift the lid near the end of the baking time. Peeking too often will significantly lower the slow cooker's temperature.
8. Don't forget to use pot holders when removing the baked goods from the slow cooker!

### Quick Bread Recipes and Cake Recipes for the Slow Cooker

[Heavenly Oatmeal Banana Bread](#)

(pictured above, left)

[Whole Wheat Bread in a Slow Cooker](#)

[Slow Cooker Apricot Nut Bread](#)

[Banana Bread](#)

[Slow Cooker Banana Nutella Bread](#)

[Slow Cooker Muffins](#)

[Slow Cooked Carrot Cake](#)

[Coffee Caramel Cake](#)

[Addicting Apple Coffee Cake](#) (pictured above, right)

[Slow Cooker Raspberry Lemon Cake](#)

## [How To Choose The Right Frosting](#)

By: [The Editors of TheBestDessertRecipes.com](#)

From whipped cream frosting, to buttercream frosting, and everything in between, we've got you covered with descriptions and suggestions as to which frosting goes with what dessert. Pretty soon, you'll be a master in deciding how to choose the right frosting.



### **Buttercream Frosting**

Buttercream is essentially the most standard, basic frosting that there is. Before being colored or flavored, buttercream frosting is off-white in color because of the butter and, most times, vanilla. So, if a frosting that is being passed off as buttercream is pure white, you may want to question whether it actually is a buttercream frosting.

Buttercream frosting is one of the least expensive frostings to make or buy. It goes great with sweet cakes and cupcakes, especially for birthdays or special occasions. When it comes to decorating, buttercream frosting holds peaks and shapes well. However, it's difficult to frost a dessert perfectly smooth with this frosting and it doesn't do all that well in the heat.

### **Whipped Cream Frosting**

Whipped cream frosting is almost as light as whipped cream, yet it's also thick and creamy. You can use it as a frosting, a filling (like for cupcakes), or even just put a dollop of it on a piece of pie, some pudding, or a bowl of fruit. Since one of the main (and only) ingredients in this frosting is whipped cream, it needs to be refrigerated if it's not being eaten immediately. Otherwise, the frosting may become a little runny and might go bad.

### **Cream Cheese Frosting**

Cream cheese frosting is about as easy to make as buttercream frosting. However, instead of having a sweet, buttery taste, cream cheese frosting is a bit more muted in flavor. It works really well with super sweet desserts because, instead of adding to the sweetness, it makes it more palatable and adds a bit of depth to the flavor.

Cream cheese frosting is traditionally the frosting of choice for carrot cake, pumpkin-flavored treats, less sweet treats like an apple walnut cake, and red velvet desserts. It also works well

with other flavors, like chocolate, but, again, since it's not as sweet as a buttercream frosting, using it depends on how you want your dessert to taste.

## **Royal Icing**

Because it doesn't really have much of a flavor, royal icing goes with practically any dessert or flavor. However, it's not a frosting in the traditional sense of the word. It is mainly used to decorate cakes and cookies, rather than just covering them and adding an extra flavor.

Royal icing is great for decorating because it really holds its shape. Because it dries hard, even if you slightly bump a royal icing-decorated cake, the decorations will still be intact. This icing is also great for piping details and for use as a glue. For instance, if you want to attach two pieces of fondant together, use royal icing as a glue.

## **Ganache**

Ganache is basically just a term for a mixture of chocolate and heavy cream. It acts as a sweet, shiny glaze for desserts like cakes and cookies. Obviously, if the flavor of your dessert doesn't really go well with chocolate, ganache may not be the best choice of "frosting" for you. For instance, it may not taste all that great on a carrot cake, depending on your flavor combination preferences. If spread or drizzle a ganache over a dessert, you don't need to add any more frosting to it (unless you want to). Your dessert will be sweet enough.

## **Fondant**

Fondant is essentially a sugar dough that can be molded into whatever shape you'd like, making it popular with cake designers. Cakes with fun shapes on them or that have fancy decorations are more than likely using fondant. So if you're looking to decorate your cake in a fancier manner than just colored icings, you'll want to go with fondant.

## Food 101: Essential Knowledge for Every Cook:

### Recipe Converter: How to Halve and Third a Recipe

By: [The Editors of RecipeLion.com](http://TheEditorsofRecipeLion.com)

Whether a recipe makes two cakes and you only need one, or if you're cooking for two instead of four, this guide for How To Cut Down a Recipe is a life-saver. Print this handy guide out and hang it in your kitchen for quick conversions.

How To Cut Down a Recipe		Halve & Third Ingredients
original	Half	One-Third
1 cup	1/2 cup	1/3 cup
3/4 cup	6 tbsp	1/4 cup
2/3 cup	1/3 cup	3 tbsp + 1-1/2 tsp
1/2 cup	1/4 cup	2 tbsp + 2 tsp
1/3 cup	2 tbsp + 2 tsp	1 tbsp + 1-1/4 tsp
1/4 cup	2 tbsp	1 tbsp + 1 tsp
1 tbsp	1-1/2 tsp	1 tsp
1 tsp	1/2 tsp	1/4 tsp
1/2 tsp	1/4 tsp	1/8 tsp
1/4 tsp	1/8 tsp	dash





## [Tips for Converting Slow Cooker Recipes](#)

By: [The Editors of AllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofAllFreeSlowCookerRecipes.com)

### General Tips for Converting Your Favorite Recipes to the Slow Cooker:

1. Before you take on the task of converting a recipe for a slow cooker, consult the guidelines from your slow cooker's manufacturer.
2. Find a similar recipe to the recipe you are converting and use it as a guide. Take note of the ingredient quantities and liquid quantities indicated in that recipe.
3. Slow Cookers produce their own moisture; you can reduce the liquid called for in the recipe a third to a half.
4. If a recipe does not include liquid at all, it's advised to add a 1/2 cup of water or broth.
5. When cooking soups and stews, place the vegetables on the bottom and sides of your crock, and place the meat on top.
6. As a rule of thumb, 1 hour of simmering on your stove or baking at 350 degrees F in the oven is equivalent to a 6 to 8 hours on LOW/ 3 to 4 hours on HIGH cooking time in your slow cooker.

Oven or Stove Top Times	LOW Slow Cooker Setting	HIGH Slow Cooker Setting
15 to 30 minutes	4 to 6 hours	1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours
35 to 45 minutes	6 to 8 hours	3 to 4 hours
50 minutes to 3 hours	8 to 10 hours	4 to 6 hours

## Cooking Conversions Chart

By: [The Editors of TheBestDessertRecipes.com](http://TheBestDessertRecipes.com)

### Cooking Conversions

This baking conversions chart shows U.S. volume equivalents, as well as U.S./Metric conversions. Reference these cooking conversions when you're unsure about how much of a certain ingredient to add, or exactly how much a recipe yields.

#### U.S. Volume Equivalents

1/2 teaspoon = 30 drops  
 3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon  
 2 tablespoons = 1 ounce = 1/8 cup  
 8 tablespoons = 4 ounces = 1/2 cup  
 16 tablespoons = 8 ounces = 1 cup  
 2 cups = 1 pint  
 4 cups = 2 pints = 1 quart = 32 ounces  
 4 quarts = 1 gallon = 16 cups = 128 ounces

#### U.S. to Metric Volume Equivalents

1/4 teaspoon = 1.23 ml  
 1 teaspoon = 4.9 ml  
 1/8 cup = 30 ml  
 1/2 cup = 120 ml  
 1 cup = 240 ml  
 4 cups = 960 ml  
 4 quarts = 3.8 l

#### U.S. to Metric Weight Equivalents\*

1/2 ounce = 14 grams  
 1 ounce = 29 grams  
 4 ounces = 113 grams  
 16 ounces = 1 pound = 454 grams  
 64 ounces = 4 pounds = 1800 grams = 1.8 kilograms



\*ounces multiplied by 28.35 = grams; pounds multiplied by .454 = kilograms

## Substitutions for Common Baking Ingredients

By: [The Editors of TheBestDessertRecipes.com](http://TheBestDessertRecipes.com)

What ingredients can you use if you don't have buttermilk? Can you substitute baking powder for baking soda? Is yogurt a good substitute for sour cream? You'll find the answers to these baking substitution questions and more here. These simple baking substitutions will come in handy when you're out of this or that.

Ingredient	Amount	Substitution
Allspice	1 tsp.	½ tsp. cinnamon, ¼ tsp. ginger, ¼ tsp. cloves
Baking Powder	1 tsp	1/4 tsp. baking soda, 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar, and 1/4 tsp. cornstarch
Baking Soda	½ tsp.	2 tsp. double-acting baking powder
Brown Sugar	1 cup, packed	1 cup white sugar plus ¼ cup molasses, then decrease liquid in recipe by ¼ cup
Buttermilk	1 cup	1 tsp. lemon juice, enough milk to make 1 cup
Cake Flour	1 cup	¾ cup all-purpose flour, 2 tablespoons cornstarch
Corn Syrup	1 cup	¼ cup white sugar plus 1/3 cup water
Cream of Tartar	1 tsp.	2 tsp. lemon juice or vinegar

## [How to Cook Eggs Correctly](#)

By: [The Editors of FaveHealthyRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsOfFaveHealthyRecipes.com)

Whether for a delicious classic breakfast or for just a quick dinner, eggs are a staple food item. But when it comes to properly preparing this wonder food, a misstep can turn a quick recipe into a food disaster. Never eat bad eggs again - learn how to cook eggs correctly.

### **How To Cook Hard Boiled Eggs**

First place the eggs in a pot with walls at least twice as tall as the egg. Then, fill up the pot with cold tap and place, uncovered, on a stove top turned to high. Once the water boils, wait about 12 minutes before removing. After the 12 minutes, run the eggs under cold water or cool in the refrigerator until ready. For easy-to-peel hard-boiled eggs, choose eggs at least a week old.



### **How To Cook Poached Eggs**

Poaching is a great cooking technique because it preserves the flavor of the egg without adding extra fat and calories to the equation. First, fill up a skillet with water and cover until it's boiling. Add a tablespoon of white vinegar and a pinch of salt to the water, then slowly pour the eggs into the boiling water and cover. The vinegar helps the egg to keep its shape during poaching. After about three minutes, simply remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and enjoy.

### **How To Cook Over Easy Eggs**

An over-easy egg is a breakfast staple, but too often it can end up too runny or too rubbery. First start out with a wide pan over medium high heat. Once the pan is sufficiently hot, spray with a good amount of cooking spray, about a tablespoon's worth, to avoid sticking. Crack the egg firmly over a flat surface, and then slow drop the yolk and whites into the pan. The egg is done once the whites are completely white, but the yolks are not completely cooked through.

### **How To Microwave Eggs**

The key to microwaving an egg is to give the steam a place to escape, as microwave ovens cook food by warming up the water inside the food item. Never microwave an egg in its shell. Crack an egg into a microwave-safe container and gently poke the yolk. Stick the egg in a microwave at about 50 percent power until done. Every one egg will need about 30 to 45 seconds of cooking time.

## [Stuffing and Dressing: What's the Difference?](#)

By: [The Editors of AllFreeCasseroleRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofAllFreeCasseroleRecipes.com)



If you're confused about the difference between stuffing and dressing, then you've come to the right place. We're here to tell you about the differences between these two classic Thanksgiving side dishes. Both stuffing and dressing are made with bread, herbs, and vegetables, and are, in fact, very similar dishes. So, why the separate names?

### **What is Stuffing?**

Stuffing is cooked inside of a fowl. It's *stuffed* inside, hence the name "stuffing." This is the more traditional way of cooking this type of side dish, but there are pros and cons to cooking it this way. On the one hand, the stuffing absorbs the turkey juices, giving it more flavor. On the other hand, it's touching raw turkey meat, so it's imperative that the bird is cooked at a minimum of 165 degrees F. to ensure both are safe to eat.

### **What is Dressing?**

Some people didn't care to cook the stuffing inside their turkey, so they began cooking them separately. This is how dressing came to be born. It contains the exact same ingredients as stuffing, it's just cooked outside of the bird. The difference is as simple as that! Now you know.

\*Fun Fact: According to the Food Network, Southerners still favor dressing while Northerners tend to eat stuffing.

### **Stuffing and Dressing Recipes**

As mentioned above, the terms stuffing and dressing can be used interchangeably. Therefore, many of our stuffing recipes are technically dressings. Some can be stuffed into turkey, but they don't have to be.

[Sausage Cornbread Stuffing](#) (pictured)

[My Favorite Stuffing](#)

[Bacon Leek Stuffing](#)

[Cornbread Cranberry Dressing](#)

[Cornbread and Wild Rice Stuffing](#)

[Southern Comfort Sausage and Cornbread Dressing](#)

## [The Differences Between Cobblers, Slumps, Grunts & More](#)

By: [The Editors of TheBestDessertRecipes.com](#)



Some desserts are just too hard to tell apart, so we've made it easy. After reading the list below, you'll be able to answer questions such as "What is a grunt?" and "What is a slump?," as well as be able to tell a crisp recipe and a cobbler recipe apart from each other.

There's a reason that these terms get so mixed up all the time. They're all desserts that prominently feature fruit and, usually, include flour, sugar, and butter as well. It's their slight differences in preparation, ingredients, or origin that earn them all different names.

### **What is a cobbler?**

Cobblers are deep-dish fruit desserts that involve a sweet fruit filling that can be supported and surrounded by a thick, biscuit-like crust. Cobbler recipes are then topped with biscuit dough. The topping can either cover the entire dish like a pie crust does for pies, be made into a lattice to cover the dish, or it can be dropped on top in spoonfuls or handfuls.

### **What is a crisp?**

A crisp is also a deep-dish fruit dessert, similar to the crumble. However, there are two major differences between a crisp and a cobbler. First, the fruit mixture is on the very bottom of the dessert. There is no crust to support or surround the fruit. Also, instead of a doughy, biscuit topping, crisps are topped with a simple crumb topping made of sugar, flour, and butter.

### **What is a crumble?**

A crumble is almost the exact same dish as a crisp. The only difference is that the streusel topping is more like a granola. Crumble recipe toppings usually include oats, but can also have coconut flakes and nuts. Both the crumble and the crisp are baked until their toppings turn a golden brown and they're the quickest of these types of desserts to make.

### **What is a grunt?**

Grunts are just like cobblers, biscuit dough topping and all, except for one important detail: they're made on top of the stove (or even over a camp fire!) rather than in the oven. The iron skillet is completely covered while the dessert bakes. Cooking recipes for grunts on top of the stove instead of in the oven like a cobbler causes the biscuit topping to steam, rather than bake.

### **What is a slump?**

Surprise! It's the same thing as a grunt! You think someone would have been able to pick a better nickname or alternative name that sounds better than "grunt," but "slump" is pretty much on the same level.

### **What is a betty?**

A Betty is basically a dessert in which fruit, usually apples, is baked between layers of buttered crumbs. Betty recipes are baked until the apples (or other fruit) are extremely tender and the crumbs are crispy. If a Betty is called a Brown Betty, which just means that brown sugar is one of the major ingredients. Some say that this was one of the first documented apple desserts in the United States.

### **What is a buckle?**

Buckle recipes can take on quite a few forms, but the most popular consists of a cake-like layer that's topped with fruit and then a layer of crumbled topping. As the buckle bakes, the cake rises along the sides of the dish and around the fruit. As a result, the fruit sinks and the rising sides the buckle in toward the center.

### **What is a pandowdy?**

Pandowdies (also spelled pan dowdies) are fruit desserts that can be made with any fruit you like, but are often made apples that are sweetened with brown sugar or molasses (hence, the popular dish "Apple Pandowdy"). The topping is usually a rolled biscuit or pie crust dough that cracks as it bakes. When it cracks, the dough slides down into the fruit and lets the juices rise up.

### **What is a sonker?**

A sonker (also called a "zonker") is a dish that's unique to North Carolina that's essentially more of a deep dish version of the cobbler. It comes in many flavors, but some of the most popular include strawberry, cherry, and sweet potato.

## **Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit: Which is Better?**

By: [The Editors of TheBestDessertRecipes.com](http://TheBestDessertRecipes.com)

When it comes to making fruit dessert recipes or any recipes with fruit, one question that people always have is if they should use fresh fruit or frozen fruit. Editors at TheBestDessertRecipes.com have created *Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit Which is Better?*, a guide that tells you the benefits and drawbacks of each kind of fruit, so that you can make an educated decision on what kind of produce to use in your homemade dessert.



### **Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit: Health Benefits**

True or false: Fresh fruit is healthier than frozen fruit. If you answered "false," you're correct. Frozen fruit (and even some canned fruit) can be as healthy, if not a bit healthier, than fresh fruit. When fruit is picked off of its vine or stem, it is already full of nutrients.

However, fresh fruit is usually picked before it's ripe to minimize any damage that may occur during shipping and transportation to your local supermarket or grocery store. Therefore, it doesn't have as many nutrients in it as it would if it were picked when ripe. While being transported, the fruit is exposed to many conditions, including heat and light, that diminish some of the health benefits. Essentially, the fruit loses nutrients as it travels from the farm or the orchard to your kitchen. So, while picking fruit early helps avoid damage or degradation, fresh fruit from the grocery store isn't as full of nutrients as you'd think it would be.

In contrast, frozen fruit is picked at its peak of ripeness and then immediately blanched before being flash-frozen. Blanching the fruit basically involves boiling it in water to sterilize it. Fruits do lose a few nutrients during the blanching process, but still retain quite a lot. The only other time frozen fruit may lose nutrients is during the reheating process, but that can be easily avoided. Instead of boiling the fruit, simply microwave or steam it to ensure that it doesn't lose any health benefits. If you're looking to maximize the health benefits of using frozen fruit, make sure to choose frozen fruit that does not have any added sugar or syrup.

### **Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit: Flavor**

Because frozen fruit is picked at the peak of ripeness, it can be much more flavorful than fresh fruit. Fruit that ripens naturally on the vine or on a branch is going to taste a bit better than fruit that ripens on its own. However, there's something about the taste of fresh fruit that frozen fruit just can't match.



Note: Just because frozen fruit and fresh fruit taste similar and you may feel that they are interchangeable doesn't mean that they necessarily are in all instances. If you're baking or cooking with them, be sure to read the recipe because baking or cooking processes change the textures of the fruits and may make them unsuitable for the dish.

### **Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit: "Shelf" Life**

When trying to decide between eating fresh vs. frozen fruit, consider the time frame in which you're planning on eating it. Unless you use or freeze your fresh fruit right after you buy it, it will usually go bad within a few days (a week at the most). Frozen fruit is nice because, depending on the brand, it can stay in your freezer for up to six months. Buying and using frozen can also reduce waste because you don't have to eat it all right away or throw away the fruits that went bad.

### **Fresh vs. Frozen Fruit: Price and Availability**

Price and availability are a major factor in deciding between fresh vs. frozen fruit. The price for each type of fruit really depends on two things: the place at which you purchase your fruit and the time of year. Let's start with fresh fruit. Depending on your location and preferences, fresh fruit purchased at farmers markets may be slightly more expensive or less expensive than they would be at a local supermarket. Prices for fresh fruit are heavily dependent on the time of year due to the fruits' availability. If a fruit is out of season locally, it may need to be shipped from a faraway farm or orchard, causing the price of the fruit to increase.

On the other hand, seasons have little to no influence on the price of frozen fruit because it's always available. However, some grocery stores sell it at a higher price than others. Also, depending on the availability of certain fresh fruits, it may be more expensive to buy frozen rather than fresh (or vice versa). For all frozen fruits, it's a good rule of thumb to buy in bulk so that you're getting buying them at the best possible price.

## Dietary Restrictions: What is Gluten Free?

### What is Gluten Free?

By: [The Editors of FaveGlutenFreeRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofFaveGlutenFreeRecipes.com)



Gluten is a protein that is found in wheat. In order to follow a gluten free diet, a person should avoid all wheat (including kamut and spelt), barley, rye, and oats that have been contaminated by wheat through processing. Gluten is also found in wheat products and by-products, and those foods that are made with wheat. In its simplest definition, "gluten-free" means "wheat-free."

**DISCLAIMER:** *I am not a doctor or a dietician. This article is meant for informational purposes only and should not be used as a diet guide. If you are considering changing your diet, talk to a doctor before doing so.*

There are many reasons as to why a person would avoid gluten. The number one reason would be Celiac Disease. This disease causes damage to the small intestine that prevents vital nutrients from food from being absorbed. This reaction is caused when someone with Celiac Disease eats food like bread or cake that is not gluten-free. Maintaining a gluten-free diet is the only known treatment for Celiac Disease. Another reason that someone would avoid gluten is due to gluten intolerance, which is very similar in its symptoms but to a lesser degree than Celiac Disease.

Gluten is a binding agent that holds dough made with flour together. In order to bake wheat free goods, you have to find another binding agent to hold the dough together, which is what many gluten free flour mixes, such as Bob's Red Mill, has done. Xanthum gum and arrowroot powder have been found to create similar consistency in dough that gluten does.

[According to the MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com), here is a list of foods that are OK to eat on a gluten-free diet:

- Beans, seeds, nuts in their natural, unprocessed form
- Fresh eggs
- Fresh meats, fish and poultry (not breaded, batter-coated or marinated)
- Fruits and vegetables
- Most dairy products

**Many grains and starches can be part of a gluten-free diet:**

- Amaranth
- Arrowroot
- Buckwheat
- Corn and cornmeal
- Flax
- Gluten-free flours (rice, soy, corn, potato, bean)
- Hominy (corn)
- Millet
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Sorghum
- Soy
- Tapioca
- Teff

**You should always avoid:**

- Barley (malt, malt flavoring and malt vinegar are usually made from barley)
- Rye
- Triticale (a cross between wheat and rye)
- Wheat
- Bulgur
- Durum flour
- Farina
- Graham flour
- Kamut
- Semolina
- Spelt

There are many companies who are now offering gluten free versions of their products, but **be careful when buying any of these. They should be labeled gluten-free:**

- Beer
- Breads
- Cakes and pies
- Candies
- Cereals
- Cookies and crackers
- Croutons
- French fries
- Gravies
- Imitation meat or seafood
- Matzo
- Pastas
- Processed luncheon meats
- Salad dressings
- Sauces, including soy sauce
- Seasoned rice mixes
- Seasoned snack foods, such as potato and tortilla chips
- Self-basting poultry
- Soups and soup bases
- Vegetables in sauce
- Oats

Whenever you think of changing your diet, you should consult a doctor or dietician. By avoiding gluten, you risk the chance that you will not get enough vital nutrients and minerals such as iron, calcium, fiber, folate, and riboflavin.

## [Gluten-Free Baking and Cooking Substitutions](#)

By: [The Editors of FaveGlutenFreeRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofFaveGlutenFreeRecipes.com)

With these gluten-free baking tips, we give you easy substitutions for gluten-free flours and other commonly used pantry items. Luckily, there are a ton of tricks that you can do to make the most out of your food sans gluten.

### SUBSTITUTIONS FOR GLUTEN-FREE COOKING AND BAKING

Gluten-Free  
Substitutions  
for Everyday  
Foods

- GF bread for breadcrumbs.
- Nuts instead of croutons.
- Oats for breadcrumbs.
- Lettuce wraps for sandwich bread.
- Corn tortillas for flour tortillas.
- Zucchini for noodles.
- Spaghetti squash for spaghetti.

- Brown Rice Flour
- Coconut Flour
- Black Bean Flour
- Sorghum Flour
- Gluten-Free Oat Flour
- Almond Flour

Gluten-Free  
Substitutions for  
All-Purpose Flour

**FAVEGLUTENFREERECIPES**   
All your Favorite Recipes without the Gluten

## How To Cook: The Homemade Versions

### How to Make Homemade White Bread

By: [The Editors of AllFreeCopycatRecipes.com](http://TheEditorsofAllFreeCopycatRecipes.com)

Making homemade bread is incredibly easy with a bread machine. This Mini Loaf Basic White Bread recipe is as simple as dumping the ingredients in and pressing start. The smell of the baking loaf will fill your home with the most delightful smells. The bread recipe comes out perfectly shaped and just the right consistency. Use this great bread recipe for making sandwiches or dipping in a little olive oil and eating on its own.

Makes: 1 Mini Loaf



#### **Ingredients**

- 2/3 cups water
- 2 cups bread flour
- 1 ½ tablespoons sugar
- 1 ½ tablespoons dry milk
- ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon active dry yeast

#### **Instructions**

1. Add the water to the bread machine baking pan.
2. Add the bread flour, sugar, dry milk, and butter into the baking pan.
3. Sprinkle the yeast over the dry ingredients, but don't let it touch the water.
4. Turn on the bread machine, lock baking pan in place, and set the bread machine to the basic bread setting. Hit start.

## How to Make Homemade Pasta

By: [The Editors of RecipeLion.com](http://TheEditorsofRecipeLion.com)

Boxed pasta is great, but making your own pasta is easier than you think. There are endless recipes for making pasta dough, but this quick and easy tutorial will show you how to make pasta in a flash.

**Note:** In order to achieve the proper texture, you will need a pasta machine. Electric pasta machines are available as stand mixer attachments, or you can pick up an inexpensive tabletop manual pasta roller at your local specialty kitchen store for as little as \$25.

### How to Make Pasta

You Will Need:

- All-purpose flour
- Semolina flour
- Eggs
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Water
- Salt



This pasta recipe is so simple that you don't even need specific measurements for the ingredients. Start with a clean counter surface - you won't need bowls or boards to create this dough.

1. Measure out equal parts all-purpose flour and semolina flour. You can estimate how much to use based on how much pasta you will need. For 2-3 servings you will need about 1 cup of each flour. You can increase as necessary.
2. Gently mix the flours together by hand and make a small mound in the center of the counter. Use your finger to make a well in the middle of the flour.
3. Crack an egg into the center of your well. (You only need 1 egg if you are using 2 cups flour, you may increase proportionally if you increased the amount of flour)



4. Add about a teaspoon each of water and olive oil (for 2 cups flour). Add a pinch or two of salt.
5. Using a fork, gently beat the egg, making sure not to break the sides of the well.
6. Use the fork to gently bring some of the surrounding flour into the center to combine with the egg. Be careful not to break the well initially. As you move further and further out, continue to push flour into the center until you have a pliable dough. (You may not need all of the flour, you still want the dough to be a little moist when you're done)
7. Knead the dough gently in your hands until you have a smooth product. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for about 30 minutes.
8. After the dough has rested, cut it into 3-4 small, workable pieces. Flatten each piece with your hands.
9. Set up your pasta machine for sheets at the widest setting. Run one piece of dough through the pasta machine, then fold in half and run through again. Repeat this process 6 or 7 times, as this helps to knead the dough properly.
10. Turn the pasta machine to the next largest setting and run the pasta through again. Continue in this manner, decreasing the thickness of the pasta each time. Dust the dough with flour as necessary. Continue until the pasta is paper-thin and you can see your hand through it.
11. Repeat this process with all of the dough.



Once the dough is rolled out, you can choose what shape of pasta to make depending on the cutters you have. To make ravioli, keep the dough as sheets and drop small amounts of filling several inches apart. Lay a second sheet of pasta on top, push gently around the filling to lock it in and cut your ravioli into squares or rounds.

Cook finished pasta in boiling water for 1-3 minutes.

## How to Make Homemade Ice Cream

By: [The Editors of RecipeLion.com](http://TheEditorsofRecipeLion.com)



Once upon a time, making ice cream was extremely difficult for the average person to do. Endless freezing and constant manual turning made ice cream making more of a chore than a pleasure. Luckily, now there are some excellent machines on the market that turn crafting old fashioned recipes for homemade ice cream into a simple, though still a bit time consuming, task. Here are some basic tips for ice cream making that you should know before you start looking at

recipes:

- There are two types of ice cream makers: electric machines and manual turns. On the less advanced end, the electric machines are not all that expensive and are a lot easier than the manual ones.
- Some electric turners require the use of ice and salt to keep the mixture cool while it is turning. Others come with a special solution inside it that replaces the ice and salt.
- Salt can be bought from any grocery store and is labeled as "ice cream salt" most of the time. It is not the same as table salt and you will use a lot of it if you are making ice cream a lot.
- You can also make ice cream with a hand mixture, using the "still freezing" technique. This is more work, but requires you to periodically mix the ice cream during the freezing process.
- The basic ingredients of most ice cream are cream, milk, sugar, corn starch, eggs, and some flavoring.
- Making ice cream at home can take a lot of time and effort, but the flavor is fantastic and it is cheaper than buying ice cream at the store.
- When you purchase a machine, it will have specific instructions that come along with it.
- There are many different varieties of ice cream, so have fun and experiment with them!



## Bobo's Banana Ice Cream

Now that you have an idea of what you need to make some homemade ice cream, why not try one of our great, old fashioned recipes for homemade ice cream? One popular recipe is Bobo's Banana Ice Cream. This tasty banana frozen treat is a little something different than vanilla. Check it out below:

### *Ingredients*

- 2 overripe bananas
- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar
- 2 heavy or whipping cream
- 1 cup milk
- Juice of one lemon

### *Instructions*

1. Whisk the eggs in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Whisk in the sugar, a little at a time, then continue whisking until completely blended, about 1 minute more.
3. Pour in the cream and milk and whisk to blend.
4. Take this base and transfer to an ice cream maker and freeze following the manufacturer's directions.
5. Mash the bananas and lemon juice together in a bowl, then whisk until smooth.
6. After the ice cream stiffens (about 2 minutes before it is done), add the banana mixture, then continue freezing until the ice cream is ready.

## How to Make Vanilla Sugar

By: [The Editors of RecipeLion.com](http://TheEditorsofRecipeLion.com)

### What is Vanilla Sugar?

In simple terms, vanilla sugar is just Costa Rican granulated sugar mixed with vanilla beans or extract to give it that strong vanilla flavor.

### How Do You Make Vanilla Sugar?

1. Vanilla sugar is really very easy to make at home and it can be much cheaper than buying it in high-end food stores. Finally learn the steps to making delicious vanilla sugar right at home.
2. Start out by buying a pound of normal granulated sugar and two vanilla bean pods. The pods can be found at nice grocery stores or online. Next, bruise the pods by bending them in your hands.
3. Slice the pods open down the middle and pull out the vanilla beans inside. Then cut empty pods into smaller pieces.
4. Place sugar in an air-tight container. Add sugar beans and pods to your container, shake and seal.
5. Your vanilla sugar will be ready in a couple weeks. Keep shaking the mixture every couple of days or so.
6. You'll know your vanilla sugar is ready when it is that off-white color instead of the white of normal sugar. You will also see the vanilla specks well distributed throughout the sugar.
7. As you start using it, feel free to add more sugar to the container to make your vanilla go as far as it can.

## Special Thanks

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The Following Contributors Made this eBook Possible



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