

Hints, Tips, and Techniques to Use When Cooking

Easy Vegetarian Meals

By Chef Cal Kraft

Use non-stick cooking spray for measuring sticky substances like honey or molasses

To prevent nuts from turning rancid, store them in the freezer

Use Kosher Salt on a damp sponge/cloth to clean cast iron cookware or burnt-on foods

Refresh Greens with a spritz of lemon water

Use a small amount of olive oil when cooking with butter; it prevents the butter from smoking/burning.

A bottle of 50/50 oil for everyday cooking, half olive oil, half vegetable oil

When reheating items in the oven, place an ovenproof bowl with some water in it on the bottom shelf to prevent things from drying out

Try to use only whole nutmeg, freshly ground, and whole peppercorns, freshly ground for the best flavor

Use Kosher Salt for almost all your cooking; use table salt for baking. Sea salt is a finishing salt

When using dry herbs/spices, rub amount in palm of hand to release the most flavor/oils

Always slice basil, never chop. Chopping will bruise basil and turn it black

You can add Potato Flakes to soups and stews to use as a thickening agent

To kick up flavor for fish meals, grill lemon halves to serve with the dish

Be sure to use the proper size heating element for the right size pot. Too big or too small can damage pots/stove

For better tasting Asparagus and Celery, peel it first to remove the fibrous strings

Roast vegetables to get the best flavor without loss of vitamins

When cooking cabbage or cauliflower, add a little vinegar to the water to cut down on cooking odors

Adding chopped celery to a pot of cooking beans makes them easier to digest

Use an egg slicer for perfect looking, evenly sliced fruit for salads and pies

To keep your salad crisp at serving time, chill the plates prior to using

As a general rule, boil all vegetables that grow above ground, roast those that grow below the ground for best flavor

Never soak vegetables after slicing - they will lose most of their nutritional value

A little vinegar (white) or lemon juice added to cooked potatoes before draining will make them extra white when mashed

When baking in a glass container, reduce the oven temperature by 25-degrees

Enhance the flavor of nuts by toasting them before using. You can either bake in a 300-degree oven on a baking sheet for 5 – 8 minutes or in a dry fry pan over medium heat just until you can smell the nuts. Remove from pan or baking sheet once done or they will continue to cook

The freshness of eggs can be tested by placing them in a large bowl of cold water, if they float, do not use them

If you are going to whip egg whites for meringue, keep the eggs at room temperature prior to using. You will get a higher volume

Never overcook foods that are to be frozen. Foods will finish cooking when reheated. Don't refreeze cooked, thawed foods.

To clean Corning Ware, fill it with water and drop in two denture cleaning tablets. Let stand 30 to 45 minutes, then wash.

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