2-2012

Basic Keys to Food Preparation

Diana Drury
University of Kentucky, diana.drury@uky.edu

Click here to let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://uknowledge.uky.edu/fcs_reports

Part of the Dietetics and Clinical Nutrition Commons

Repository Citation
Drury, Diana, "Basic Keys to Food Preparation" (2012). Family and Consumer Sciences Publications. 10.
https://uknowledge.uky.edu/fcs_reports/10

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Cooperative Extension Service at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Family and Consumer Sciences Publications by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.
Some people have a real gift for food preparation. Most of us, however, are short on time and need simple, fast recipes.

Cooking is a science. How protein foods react to heat, how yeast acts in different temperatures or how baking soda works are all based on chemical reactions. A good recipe is the result of kitchen chemistry done right. This is especially true for baked goods. Straying from a proven recipe can result in a poor product. To get the best results, it is important to follow the recipe.

Having the right measuring tools is basic to cooking and baking. Your NEP assistant can show you how to make a measuring cup from a glass jar. A set of measuring spoons is also important.

### Measuring Equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>3 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tablespoons</td>
<td>⅛ cup = 2 fluid ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 1/3 tablespoons</td>
<td>⅜ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 tablespoons</td>
<td>½ cup = 4 fluid ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 tablespoons</td>
<td>1 cup = 8 fluid ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup butter or margarine</td>
<td>½ pound = 2 sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cups</td>
<td>1 quart = 32 fluid ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 quarts = 1 gallon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measurements are always level, unless stated otherwise. For instance, 1 teaspoon is level, while 1 heaping teaspoon is rounded on the top. Refer to the chart on the left to learn more about measurements.

To help you understand recipes, it is good to know some abbreviations and what they stand for:

- c = cup
- gal = gallon
- in or " = inch
- lb or # = pound
- oz = ounce
- qt = quart
- t or (tsp) = teaspoon
- T or (Tbsp) = tablespoon
# Cooking Terms

## Cutting Terms
- **Chop:** to cut into pieces with a knife
- **Dice:** to cut into very small cubes
- **Mince:** to cut or chop into very fine pieces
- **Cube:** to cut squares about ½-inch to 1-inch thick
- **Grate:** to shred into small pieces using a grater
- **Peel/Pare:** to strip or cut off outer covering
- **Slice:** to cut into flat, thin, even pieces

## Mixing Terms
- **Beat:** to make a mixture smooth using a mixer or wire whisk
- **Blend:** to thoroughly mix 2 or more ingredients
- **Cream:** to mix a softened fat with another food, usually sugar
- **Fold:** to use a spatula to cut down into a mixture and across the bottom of the bowl with gentle movements.
- **Stir:** to mix with a circular motion for even distribution
- **Whip:** to beat rapidly to incorporate air and increase volume

## Using the Oven
- **Bake:** to cook in an oven or oven type appliance
- **Baste:** to moisten meat while cooking with liquid, such as fruit juice, sauce or meat drippings—using a bulb baster, brush or spoon
- **Roast:** to cook uncovered in hot air
- **Broil:** to cook with heat from above, using the burner located in the top of the oven.

## On the Stove Top
- **Blanch:** to preheat in boiling water or steam
- **Boil:** to heat a liquid to a constant bubble
- **Braise:** to cook meat in a small amount of steaming liquid inside a covered pot
- **Pan-fry:** generally uses no more than ¼ inch of oil in pan
- **Sauté:** to brown or cook in a very small amount of fat
- **Sear:** to brown the surface of meat with intense heat for a short time
- **Simmer:** to cook in liquid just below the boiling point
- **Stew:** to simmer in a small amount of liquid
- **Stir-fry:** to cook veggies or meat in oil over high heat for a brief time

## This and That
- **Dash:** less than ⅛ teaspoon
- **Puree:** to mash ingredients to a pulp
- **Strain:** to remove liquid
- **Coat:** to cover surface with another substance, such as flour
- **Dredge:** to lightly coat or sprinkle for example, with bread crumbs or flour