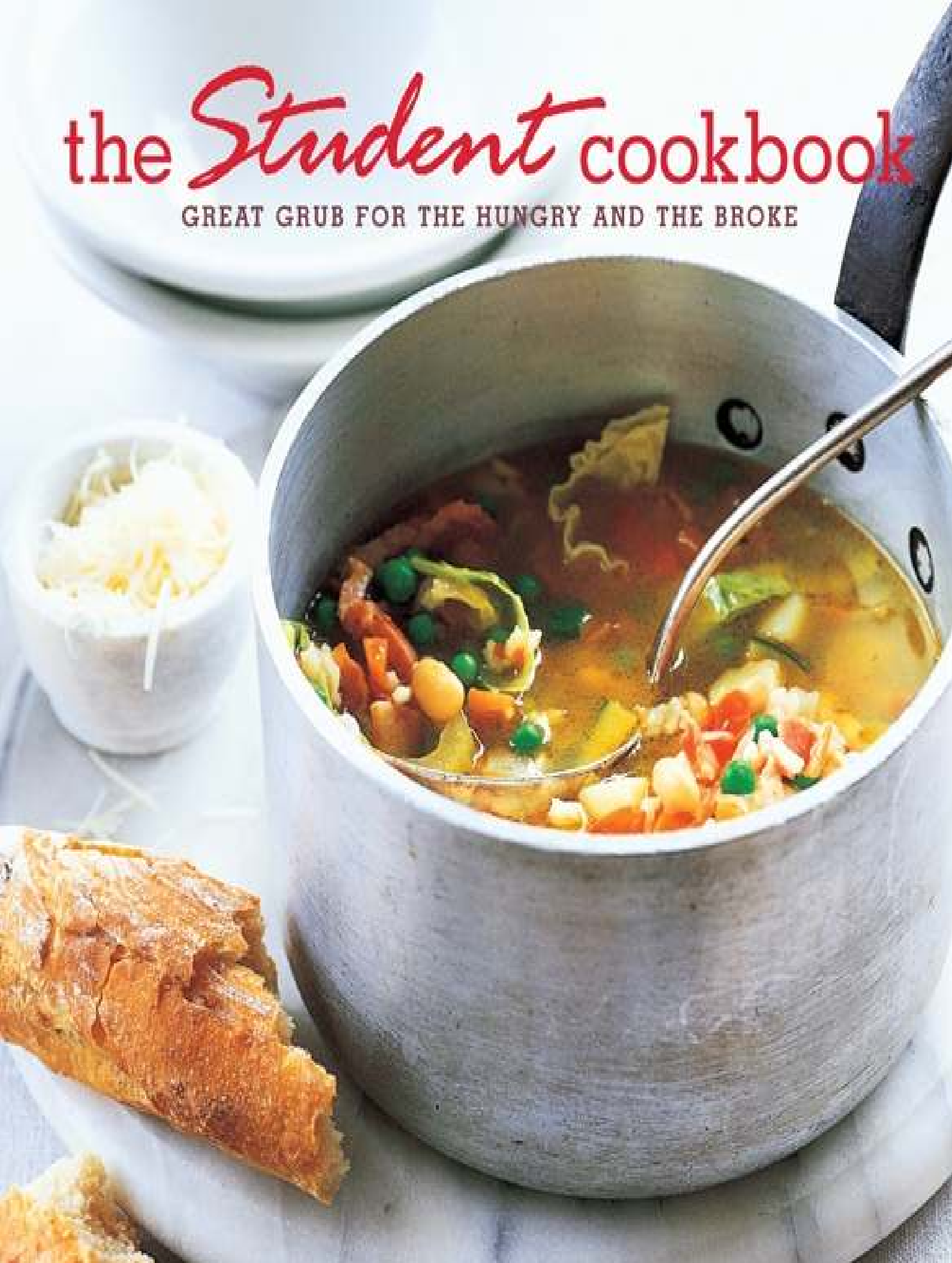


the *Student* cookbook

GREAT GRUB FOR THE HUNGRY AND THE BROKE



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Notes:

- All spoon measurements are level, unless otherwise specified.
- Ovens should be preheated to the specified temperature. Recipes in this book were tested using a regular oven. If using a fan-assisted oven, follow the manufacturer's instructions for adjusting temperatures.
- All eggs are medium, unless otherwise specified. Recipes containing raw or partially cooked egg, or raw fish or shellfish, should not be served to the very young, very old, anyone with a compromised immune system or pregnant women.





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Now that you're a fully fledged student and embracing independence, you're going to want to know how to cook up a storm in the kitchen. *The Student Cookbook* is here to allay any fears you might have about making your own dinner, and if you're already a budding cook, to give you some fresh inspiration. All the recipes are easy and delicious! Some are super-quick, while others need time in the oven or on the hob to work their magic. Either way, they are stress-free and designed to satisfy, whether you're coming home late with a mammoth hunger after a big night out, or you're having friends over for a lazy Sunday lunch. Make sure you check out the tips in the following pages before you get started – they will make life a whole lot easier and ensure that your culinary efforts are always successful, undaunting, and above all, fun.

introduction

kitchen know-how

The recipes in this book need the minimum of kitchen equipment. Some recipes, like the desserts, will require extras, e.g. a handheld electric whisk (which can be bought very cheaply), a baking tin for brownies, etc. but you can go a long way with these essentials:



2 or 3 sharp knives, including a serrated knife
wooden spoon
fish/egg slice
potato masher
garlic crusher
pepper mill
tin opener
vegetable peeler
cheese grater
2 chopping boards (1 for meat and 1 for veg)
large mixing bowl
sieve
colander
1 large and 1 medium saucepan
frying pan with a lid
baking tray
roasting tin
ovenproof dish (Pyrex or ceramic)
measuring jug
weighing scales
a selection of airtight containers
kettle
toaster
aluminium foil
clingfilm
greaseproof paper
kitchen paper
cleaning stuff, including washing up liquid, sponges and surface cleaner

Every recipe has at least two of these symbols:

serves

4

This tells you roughly how many people the recipe should serve

Q

This is an extra-quick recipe, and shouldn't take you longer than 20 minutes once you've prepared the ingredients.

V

This recipe includes some meat or poultry.

M

This recipe includes some fish or seafood.

F

Additionally, where a recipe calls for salt and black pepper, use sea salt and freshly ground black pepper if at all possible. They give the best flavour.

Whenever a recipe calls for olive oil, if you are using it raw (e.g. in a salad dressing or drizzled over vegetables), the extra virgin variety is the tastiest. For frying or roasting, use a basic (not extra virgin), mild variety.

handy ingredients

sea salt
black peppercorns
olive oil
vegetable or sunflower oil
balsamic vinegar
red or white wine vinegar
dark or light soy sauce
tomato ketchup (as if you needed reminding!)
mustard
mayonnaise
long grain rice
risotto rice
dried pasta, including spaghetti
couscous
stock cubes or bouillon powder
tinned chopped tomatoes
a selection of tinned beans, such as cannellini, kidney
tinned tuna
plain flour
sugar
tomato purée
a selection of dried herbs, such as oregano
a selection of dried spices, such as curry powder, ground cumin, paprika, chilli powder or dried red chilli flakes
Marmite
honey
butter or margarine
milk
onions

food safety

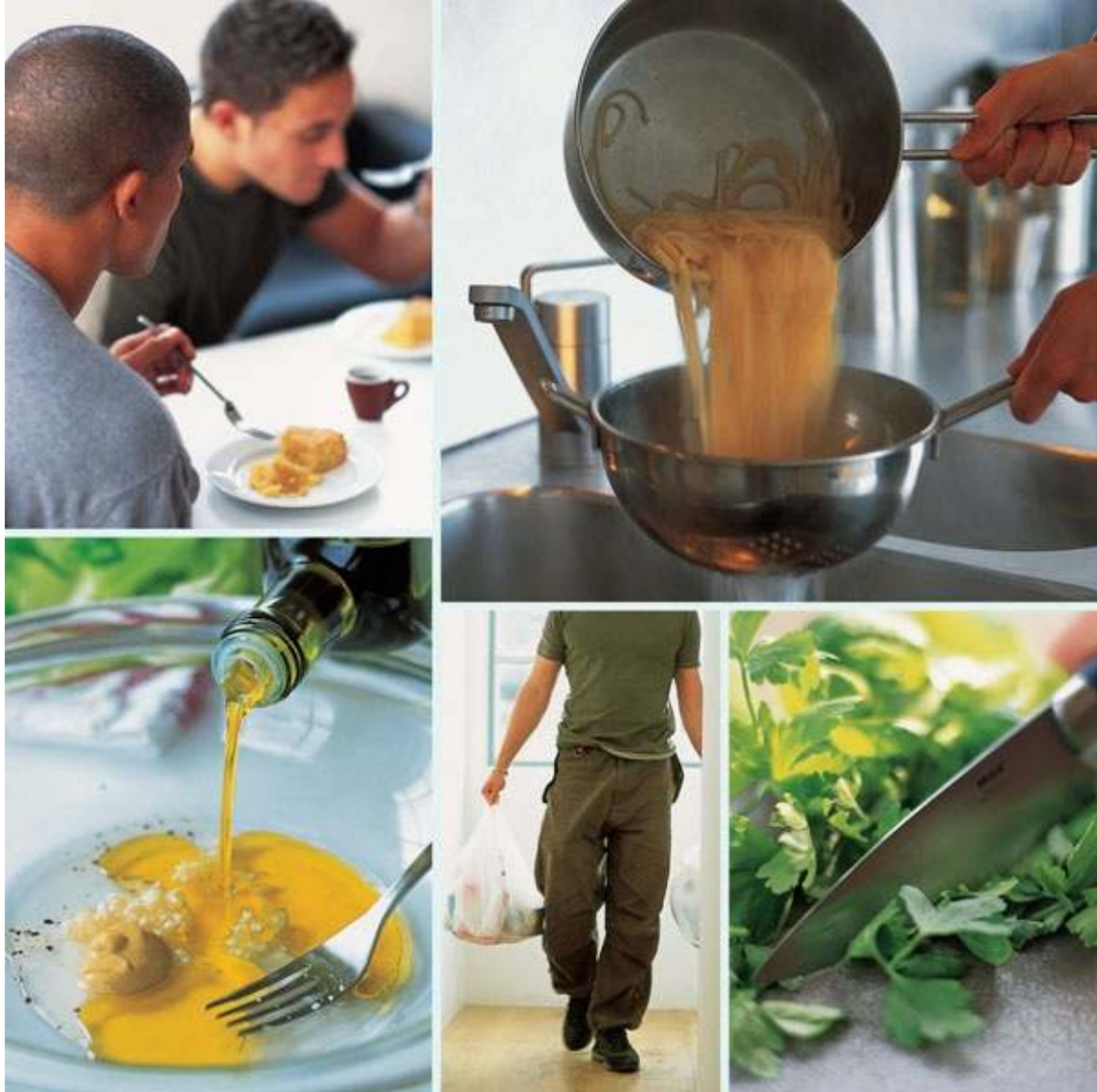
- Always keep your kitchen clean! Keep it tidy and disinfect worktops after use with a mild detergent or an antibacterial cleaner. Keep pets off surfaces and, as far as possible, keep them out of the kitchen.
- Store food safely to avoid cross-contamination. Keep food in clean, dry, airtight containers, always store raw and cooked foods separately and wash utensils (and your hands) between preparing raw and cooked foods. Never put cooked food on a surface that you have used to prepare raw meat, fish or poultry without thoroughly washing and drying the surface first.
- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food, and after you have handled raw meat and fish.
- Never put hot food into a fridge, as this will increase the internal temperature to an unsafe level. Cool leftover food quickly to room temperature, ideally by transferring it to a cold dish, then refrigerate. Cool large dishes such as stews by putting the dish in a sink of cold water. Stir occasionally (change the water often to keep the temperature low), then refrigerate once cool. During cooling, cover the food loosely with clingfilm to protect it from contamination.
- Don't use perishable food beyond the 'use-by' date as it could be a health risk. If you have any doubts about the food, discard it.
- Reheated food must be piping hot throughout before consumption. Never reheat any type of food more than once.
- Frozen meat and poultry should be thoroughly defrosted before you cook them otherwise the centre may not be cooked, which could be dangerous.
- If you are going to freeze food, freeze food that is in prime condition, on the day of purchase, or as soon as a dish is made and cooled. Freeze it quickly and in small quantities, if possible. Label and date food and keep a good rotation of stock in the freezer.
- Always leave a gap in the container when freezing liquids, so that there is enough room for the liquid to expand as it freezes.
- Always let food cool before freezing it. Warm or hot food will increase the internal temperature of the freezer and may cause other foods to begin to defrost and spoil.
- Use proper oven gloves to remove hot dishes from the oven – don't just use a tea towel because you risk burning yourself. Tea towels are also a breeding ground for germs so only use them for drying, and wash them often.
- Hard cheeses such as Cheddar, Gruyère and Parmesan will keep for up to 3 weeks if stored correctly. Once opened, fresh, soft cheeses such as cream cheese should be consumed within 3 days.
- Leftover tinned foods should be transferred to an airtight container, kept in the fridge and eaten within 2 days. Once tins are opened, the contents should be treated as fresh food. This doesn't apply to food sold in tubs with resealable lids, such as cocoa powder.

- The natural oils in chillies may cause irritation to your skin and eyes. When preparing them, ~~wear disposable gloves or pull a small polythene bag over each hand, secured with an elastic band around the wrist, to create a glove.~~
- If your kitchen is prone to overheating, it is best to store eggs in their box in the fridge. Keep them pointed-end downwards and away from strong-smelling foods, as they can absorb odours. Always use by the 'best-before' date.
- Wash hands before and after handling eggs, and discard any cracked and/or dirty eggs.
- Cooked rice is a potential source of food poisoning. Cool leftovers quickly (ideally within an hour), then store in an airtight container in the fridge and use within 24 hours. Always reheat cooked cold rice until piping hot.

ingredients tips

- When substituting dried herbs for fresh, use roughly half the quantity the recipe calls for, as dried herbs have a more concentrated flavour.
- Chop leftover fresh herbs, spoon them into an ice-cube tray, top each portion with a little water and freeze. Once solid, put the cubes in a freezer bag. Seal, label and return to the freezer. Add the frozen herb cubes to soups, casseroles and sauces as needed.
- The colour of a fresh chilli is no indication of how hot it will be. Generally speaking, the smaller and thinner the chilli, the hotter it will be.
- To reduce the heat of a fresh chilli, cut it in half lengthways, then scrape out and discard the seeds and membranes (or core). See also 'food safety' above for advice on handling chillies.
- Most vegetables keep best in the fridge, but a cool, dark place is also good if you lack fridge space. Potatoes should always be stored in the dark, otherwise they go green or sprout, making them inedible.
- To skin tomatoes, score a cross in the base of each one using a sharp knife. Put them in a heatproof bowl, cover with boiling water, leave for about 30 seconds, then transfer them to a bowl of cold water. When cool enough to handle, drain and peel off the skins with a knife.
- To clean leeks, trim them, then slit them lengthways about a third of the way through. Open the leaves a little and wash away any dirt from between the layers under cold running water.
- Store flour in its original sealed packaging or in an airtight container in a cool, dry, airy place. Ideally, buy and store small quantities at a time, to help avoid infestation of psocids (very small, barely visible, grey-brown insects), which may appear even in the cleanest of homes. If you do find these small insects in your flour, dispose of it immediately and wash and dry the container thoroughly. Never mix new flour with old.
- If you run out of self-raising flour, sift together 2 teaspoons of baking powder with every 225 g plain flour. This will not be quite as effective but it is a good emergency substitute.
- Store raw meat and fish on the bottom shelf in the fridge to prevent it dripping onto anything below.
- Store coffee (beans and ground) in the fridge or freezer, or it will go stale very quickly.

- Store oils, well sealed, in a cool, dark, dry place, away from direct sunlight. They can be kept in the fridge (though this is not necessary), but oils such as olive oil tend to solidify and go cloudy in the fridge. If this happens, bring the oil back to room temperature before use.



- To de-vein large prawns, cut along the back of each shell using a sharp knife and lift or scrape out the dark vein. Alternatively, use a skewer to pierce the flesh at the head end of the prawn, just below the vein, then use the skewer to gently remove the vein.
- Small pasta tubes and twists such as penne and fusilli are good for chunky vegetable sauces and some meat- and cream-based sauces. Larger tubes such as rigatoni are ideal for meat sauces. Smooth, creamy, butter- or olive oil-based sauces and meat sauces are ideal for long strands such as spaghetti (so the sauce can cling to the pasta).
- Dried pasta has a long shelf life and should be stored in its unopened packet or in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. Leftover cooked pasta should be kept in a sealed container in the fridge and used within 2 days. Ordinary cooked pasta does not freeze well on its own, but it freezes successfully in dishes such as lasagne and cannelloni. Allow 85–115 g dried pasta per person.
- Pasta must be cooked in a large volume of salted, boiling water. Keep the water at a rolling boil throughout cooking. Once you have added the pasta to the boiling water, give it a stir, then cover the pan to help the water return to the boil as quickly as possible.

Remove the lid once the water has started boiling again (to prevent the water boiling over), and stir occasionally. Check the manufacturer's instructions for cooking times. When it is ready, cooked pasta should be al dente – tender but with a slight resistance.



- As an accompaniment, allow 55–85 g uncooked rice per person or for a main like risotto up to 115 g.
- Rice may be rinsed before cooking to remove tiny pieces of grit or excess starch. Most packaged rice is checked and clean, however, so rinsing it is unnecessary and will wash away nutrients. Risotto rice is not washed before use, but basmati rice usually is – rinse it under cold water until the water runs clear.





taste tips

- Try mixing a pinch or two of ground spices such as curry powder, chilli powder or turmeric with breadcrumbs or flour, and use to coat foods before frying. Add ground spices such as cinnamon, mixed spice or ginger to fruit crumble toppings. A pinch or two of ground nutmeg will perk up mashed potatoes, cheese sauce, cooked spinach, bread sauce and rice puddings.
- Stir wholegrain mustard into mashed potatoes or mayonnaise before serving to add extra flavour. Mustard also enhances salad dressings and sauces. A pinch of mustard powder added to cheese dishes will enhance the flavour.
- If you add too much salt to a soup or casserole, add one or two peeled and cubed potatoes to soak up the salt, cooking until tender. Discard the potatoes before serving.
- An excellent way of thickening soups is to stir in a little oatmeal. It adds flavour and richness too. A small amount of instant mashed potato stirred in at the last minute is also good way of thickening soup.
- Add a little pearl barley to soups and stews – it will add flavour and texture and have a thickening effect.
- A teaspoon or two of pesto sauce stirred into each portion of a hot vegetable soup just before serving will liven it up.



- For a tasty and creamy salad dressing, mash some blue cheese and stir it into mayonnaise, or a mixture of mayonnaise and natural Greek yoghurt.
- Add some health and a satisfying crunch to salads by tossing in a handful or two of lightly toasted seeds or chopped nuts just before serving. Good ideas include sunflower, sesame or pumpkin seeds and hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts or pistachios. Toasted seed can also be sprinkled over cooked vegetables.



- If you over-cook an omelette, leave it to cool and use it as a sandwich filling. Chop the omelette and combine it with mayonnaise and snipped chives, if you like.
- Bulk out a pasta or rice salad by adding a tin of drained and rinsed beans such as chickpeas, red kidney beans or black-eye beans.
- For an extra-crunchy crumble topping, replace 25 g of the flour with the same weight of chopped nuts, rolled oats or oatmeal, or replace caster sugar with granulated or demerara sugar.

kitchen wisdom

- To remove odours from a container that you want to use again, fill the container with hot water, then stir in 1 tablespoon baking powder. Leave it to stand overnight, then wash, rinse well and dry before use.
- If you transfer foods from packets to storage containers, sellotape the food label onto the container so you can easily identify its contents and you have a record of the manufacturer's cooking instructions, if necessary. Make a note of the 'best-before' or 'use-by' date on the container, too.
- For convenient single servings, freeze portions of home-made soup in large, thick paper cups or small individual containers. Remove them from the freezer as required, defrost and reheat the soup thoroughly before serving.
- To make salad dressings or vinaigrettes, put all the ingredients in a clean screw-top jar, seal and shake well. Alternatively, put the ingredients straight into the salad bowl and whisk together well, before adding the salad.
- Spirits with an alcohol content of 35% or over can be kept in the freezer – this is ideal for those which should be served ice-cold.
- To remove fishy odours after preparing fish, rub the cut surface of a lemon over your hands, the knife and chopping board. Rubbing your hands with vinegar or salt, then rinsing and washing them, will also help to get rid of unpleasant fishy smells.

microwave safety

- The more food you are cooking, and the colder it is, the longer it will take to cook in a microwave.
- When microwaving items such as sausages or bacon that may spit during cooking, cover them loosely with kitchen paper, to avoid too much splattering.
- Many foods need to be covered during microwaving. Use microwave-safe clingfilm, a plate or a lid. Pierce clingfilm, or leave a gap at one side if using a plate or lid, to allow excess steam to escape.
- Never operate a microwave when it is empty, as the microwaves will bounce back to and damage the oven components.
- Be careful when stirring heated liquids in a container in the microwave, as they can bubble up without warning.
- After food has been removed from the microwave, it will continue to cook due to the residual heat within the food, so adhere to standing times when they are given in recipes.
- Use a microwave with a built-in turntable if possible, and make sure that you turn or stir the food several times during cooking to ensure even cooking throughout. The food towards the outer edges usually cooks first.



- Metal containers, china with a metallic trim, foil or crystal glass (which contains lead) should not be used in a microwave. Metal reflects microwaves and may damage the oven components. Microwave-safe plastic containers, ovenproof glass and ceramic dishes are all suitable, as is most household glazed china. Paper plates and kitchen paper can be used to reheat food for short periods. Roasting bags (pierced) may be used in a microwave.





snacks and sides



guacamole

Guacamole is so easy to make and very versatile. Scoop it up with the Tortilla Chips below, use it as a dip for sticks of raw veg, spread it on toast, or have it with the Beef Fajitas on [page 183](#) or the Chilli Chicken Enchiladas on [page 78](#).

serves
2-4

1 large, very ripe avocado
1 large or 2 small tomatoes, diced
juice of 1 lime

Q

1 small garlic clove, crushed
a big pinch of salt

V

a big pinch of black pepper

Using a small, sharp knife, cut the avocado in half all around from top to bottom. Twist the fruit gently and pull the two halves away from each other. Using a teaspoon, scoop out the flesh from each half into a small bowl, and throw away the stone and the skin. Gently

mash the flesh with a fork to make a lumpy purée.

Stir in the diced tomato, 2 teaspoons of the lime juice and the garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Mix all the ingredients together with the fork – the mixture should be a bit lumpy. Taste and add more lime juice or salt and pepper as needed. Eat immediately before it turns brown.

home-baked *tortilla* chips

Turn ready-made soft wheat tortillas into a crunchy snack by baking them in the oven.

serves
4–6

4 large or 6 medium wheat flour tortillas
a large baking tray

Q

V

Preheat the oven to 170°C (325°F) Gas 3.

Using kitchen scissors, cut each tortilla into 8 wedges. Spread the wedges in one layer, not overlapping, on the baking tray.

Bake them in the preheated oven for 15 minutes until they turn crisp and dry. Eat while still warm or leave to cool first.

tzatziki

Greek tzatziki is a versatile, low-fat dip and it also makes a great salad dressing or accompaniment to grilled chicken and fish or roast Mediterranean-style vegetables.

½ a cucumber, deseeded and grated

2 teaspoons salt

1 garlic clove, crushed (optional)

150 ml Greek yoghurt

juice of ½ a lemon

serves
2–4

Q

V

Mix the grated cucumber and salt together and leave for 10 minutes.

Put the cucumber in the centre of a clean tea towel, gather up the edges and twist to

squeeze as much moisture out as possible. Put the cucumber in a bowl with the remaining ingredients and stir to combine. The tzatziki will keep in the refrigerator for 3 days.

Variations:

Beetroot tzatziki Add 1 medium raw or 2 bottled beetroot, grated, and 2 tablespoons chopped chives to the mixture. This makes a great accompaniment to boiled new potatoes.

Olive tzatziki Stir 75–100 g finely chopped stoned black or green olives into the yoghurt and cucumber mixture.



tzatziki

garlic and tomato naan

This recipe calls for puffy naan bread. If none is available, you can use an Italian ciabatta loaf. Slice it in half through the middle and spread the butter over the cut sides.

2 tomatoes

50 g butter, softened
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tablespoons dried oregano
2 × 125-g naan breads
salt and black pepper



Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F) Gas 6.

Peel the tomatoes using the instructions on [page 10](#). Deseed the tomatoes, remove the cores and finely chop the flesh. Leave to cool.

Put the softened butter, garlic and oregano in a bowl and mix well. Add the chopped tomatoes and mix well to combine. Spread each naan bread with half of the mixture. Season with salt and pepper.

Bake in the preheated oven for 10–15 minutes until hot. Cut into slices and serve immediately.

cheese on toast

This is one of those dishes that's perfect when you get back late from a night out – quick, delicious and washing-up-free. It tastes great with almost any pickle, chutney or relish. Two slices just won't be enough!

2 thick slices of white bread
125 g cheese, such as Brie, Cheddar or a soft creamy goats' cheese
a few drops of Worcestershire sauce (optional)
pickles, relish or chutney, to serve



Preheat the grill.

Toast the bread under the grill on one side only. Slice, grate or spread your chosen cheese onto the untoasted side of the bread. Add a few splashes of Worcestershire sauce, if using and grill for 2–3 minutes until melted and bubbling.

Serve with pickle, relish or chutney and tuck in.

cinnamon toast

The quickest treat yet invented – hot buttered toast sprinkled with cinnamon-flavoured sugar, then grilled until crunchy. Thick slices of bread, challah or brioche (two kinds of soft bread) work best, but you can also use crumpets or English muffins split in half.

2 thick slices of white bread
unsalted butter, for spreading
1½ tablespoons caster sugar
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

serves
1-2

Q

V

Preheat the grill.

Toast the 2 slices of bread in a toaster, then spread with butter.

Mix the sugar with the cinnamon, then sprinkle it over the buttered toast to cover in an even layer.

Put the toast under the grill for 30 seconds to 1 minute until the sugar has melted and look bubbly, then carefully remove it.

Leave to cool for a minute (the sugar is very hot and will burn your lips) before eating.

cheese on toast



tomato, basil and mozzarella toasts

tomato, basil and mozzarella toasts

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