

Basic Cooking Terms

Here are some basic cooking terms and their descriptions.

Bake -To cook in an oven

Beat -To mix ingredients together using a fast, circular movement with a spoon, fork, whisk or mixer

Blend -To mix ingredients together gently with a spoon, fork, or until combined

Boil -To heat a food so that the liquid gets hot enough for bubbles to rise and break the surface

Broil -To cook under direct heat

Brown -To cook over medium or high heat until surface of food browns or darkens

Chop -To cut into small pieces

Dice -To cut into small cubes

Drain -To remove all the liquid using a colander, strainer, or by pressing a plate against the food while tilting the container

Grate or Shred -To scrape food against the holes of a grater making thin pieces

Grease -To lightly coat with oil, butter, margarine, or non-stick spray so food does not stick when cooking or baking

Knead -To press, fold and stretch dough until it is smooth and uniform, usually done by pressing with the heels of the hands

Marinate -To soak food in a liquid to tenderize or add flavor to it (the liquid is called a "marinade")

Mash -To squash food with a fork, spoon, or masher

Mince -To cut into very small pieces, smaller than chopped or diced pieces

Mix -To stir ingredients together with a spoon, fork, or electric mixer until well combined

Preheat -To turn oven on ahead of time so that it is at the desired temperature when needed (usually takes about 5 to 10 minutes)

Sauté -To cook quickly in a little oil, butter, or margarine

Simmer -To cook in liquid over low heat (low boil) so that bubbles just begin to break the surface

Steam -To cook food over steam without putting the food directly in water (usually done with a steamer)

Stir Fry -To quickly cook small pieces of food over high heat while constantly stirring the food until it is crisply tender (usually done with a wok)