

## Cooking With Garlic

Nothing is better than adding a clove or two of garlic to your favorite dishes like mashed potatoes, spaghetti, or herb butter. With that being said, garlic can go wrong in many ways. It can be a nightmare to peel, easily burn, and may flood your dish with flavor or fall short.

If this delicious bulb has frustrated you in the kitchen, do not give up! Here are a few tips and tricks to get the perfect garlic flavor in any dish.

Buying it pre-minced is one of the biggest mistakes you can make with garlic. Pre-minced garlic may taste stale and lose most of its potency. Fresh garlic is best for cooking because your cooking will burst with vibrant flavor.

When shopping, choose plump, firm bulbs with tight cloves. Bulbs that appear drier, where the skin easily falls off, are older. If you slice open a garlic clove and notice that there is a green stem inside, this indicates that the garlic is sprouting and past its prime. Remove the green stem prior to cooking.

To get the most out of garlic, store it in a dry, dark place. If stored correctly, garlic can last for several months. However, once you start removing cloves, it will spoil more quickly.

Since most recipes call for cloves, it is important to know how to convert from cloves to a more standardized measurement. One clove = 1 teaspoon chopped fresh garlic or ½ teaspoon minced fresh garlic.

When cooking with garlic, you may want a milder flavor. The best way to accomplish this is by using whole cloves. An enzyme is released when garlic is sliced, minced, or crushed, causing a strong aroma. The more you break down the garlic, the more the chemical is released so that the garlic flavor will intensify.

First of all, always remember the 10-minute garlic rule. After you have diced or sliced the cloves, let them rest for 10 minutes before cooking with them. This allows the enzyme that creates garlic's anticoagulant, antibacterial, and cancer-fighting properties to do its work before cooking since the enzyme is killed by heat.

I think it's safe to say that pretty much every home cook, at some point, has burnt garlic. It turns black and acquires an off-putting, bitter taste that will ruin an entire dish. The most important thing to remember when cooking garlic is to start it in a cold pan with cold oil. Make sure the garlic is fully coated with oil and set the temperature to low. If cooking garlic with several ingredients, add the garlic halfway through the cooking process.

What goes well with garlic? According to *The Flavor Bible*, the top tier of garlic besties is lemon, olive oil, tomatoes, and vinegar, especially balsamic and red wine.

When prepping garlic, you want to be mindful of the cooking method it will undergo. Preparing garlic for cooking can be done in several ways. Use crosswise sliced garlic in sautés, stir-fries, and quick sauces. Chopped garlic is recommended for long-simmered sauces. Minced garlic is

ideal for salad dressings, raw sauces, and dips. For the sweetest garlic, bake heads or cloves in a covered dish.

There is nothing to suck the fun out of cooking quite like standing at the counter to painstakingly peel 10 garlic cloves. There are tons of hacks for peeling garlic. A popular method includes putting the cloves in a jar and vigorously shaking it until the skin separates from the clove.

If you need large quantities of the aromatic peeled, Netflix culinary star Nadiya Hussain recommends dropping whole bulbs of garlic in boiling water for around one minute. After cooling to a touchable temperature, the cloves will peel very easily, she says.

Fresh garlic will add an unforgettable flavor to your cooking. Now, you know how to avoid some of the most common garlic mistakes.

(Sources: [www.tastingtable.com](http://www.tastingtable.com); [usda.gov](http://usda.gov); [whatscookingamerica.net](http://whatscookingamerica.net))