



## Wellness Articles

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**Proposed publication date:** April 10, 2023  
**Content provided by:** Alberta Health Services

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## Cooking Basics for Beginners

There are many benefits to cooking. It may save you money because you may order out less. It can also help you manage how much salt, sugar or saturated fat you eat. If you are a beginner at cooking, here are some tips. Keep reading to learn a few cooking terms, how to measure ingredients, plus some tips on kitchen and food safety.

Common cooking terms:

- Pre-heat – Turn on the oven so it reaches the required temperature before baking.
- Beat – Stir quickly.
- Blend – Stir until all ingredients are mixed evenly.
- Dash – Very small amount, measured by pinching an ingredient between your thumb and finger.
- Dice – Cut into small cubes.
- Fold – Gently stir two or more ingredients to combine.
- Grease – Put oil or cooking spray on pan or baking sheet to prevent sticking.
- Mince – Cut into very small pieces.
- Simmer – Cook on a stove top at a low temperature (one to three on the range), below the boiling point.

Measuring:

- Use measuring spoons for spices, baking powder and oils typically used in small amounts.
- For dry ingredients used in large amounts, such as flour or sugar, scoop into a measuring cup.
- For dry ingredients used in large and small amounts, level each measurement with the back of a knife to ensure you get the exact amount needed.

- For yogurt, nut butters, and cottage cheese, use dry measuring cups.

Safety tips:

- Open pot lids or tinfoil away from you to prevent burns.
- It may be beneficial to purchase a meat thermometer to cook foods to the proper internal temperatures.
- After handling raw meat, wash your hands with hot soapy water for 15 seconds.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and vegetables or fruits.
- To prevent the growth of bacteria that can cause food poisoning, keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.