

Cooking Terms Defined...

- Do cooking terms like "**FRICASSEE**," "**BRAISE**," "**BOUQUET GARNI**" and "**TRUSS**" leave you scratching your head?
- Ever find yourself frantically turning to the internet (with food-covered hands) in search of a cooking term definition?
- Perhaps you know the definition of all these terms, and can, in fact, teach me a few more. If this describes you, then this guide is not meant for you.
- However, if you are a novice cook, you might find this cheat sheet exactly what you need to get you on your way to being a better cook!



Please feel free to share this guide with your college-bound kids, or anyone else that you know who is interested in learning how to cook!



Cooking Terms Defined...

A

AL DENTE:

Italian term used to describe pasta that is cooked firm to the bite.

B

BASTE:

To moisten meat while cooking, with either the pan juices, sauce, or marinade, to add more flavor and prevent drying.

BATTER:

A thin mixture of flour and liquid, similar to pancake batter, used as a coating for fried food.

BEAT:

To vigorously mix ingredients in order to aerate them.

BIAS-SLICE:

To slice food at a 45-degree angle.

BLACKENED:

A Cajun cooking method in which highly seasoned meat is charred using high heat.

BLANCH:

To scald an ingredient (usually vegetables) in boiling water for a brief time, then immerse in ice water to halt the cooking process.

BLEND:

To incorporate two or more ingredients together until smooth and uniform in texture.



Cooking Terms Defined...

BOUQUET GARNI:

A cheesecloth pouch (filled with herbs), placed in either soup or stew, to enhance the flavor. It is also known as a "Sachet."

BRAISE:

To brown food in fat first, then slowly cook in a small amount of liquid, in a covered pan.

BROIL:

To cook in the oven, under strong, direct heat.

BUTTERFLY:

To split meat down the middle, without completely separating the two halves, resembling a butterfly.

C

CARAMELIZE:

To convert sugar into a liquid by heating. Also used to describe sautéing onions until they are browned, and take on a sweet flavor.

CHIFFONADE:

A French word to describe a way to cut herbs and leafy vegetables into thin strips.

CHOP:

To cut food into pieces using a sharp knife.

CLARIFY:

To separate solids from a liquid, while cooking, to make a clear liquid.



Cooking Terms

Defined...

CREAM:

To soften butter, by beating with an electric mixer, until fluffy. Especially when combined with sugar.

CRUSH:

To smash food into smaller pieces.

CURE:

To preserve meats by drying, salting, and/or smoking.

CUT IN:

Mixing butter or shortening into flour, using a pastry blender, until the mixture is fully incorporated and pea-sized.

D

DASH:

A small amount of food, usually between 1/16 and 1/8 tsp.

DEGLAZE:

To dislodge browned bits stuck to the bottom of a pan, to extract the flavor. This is done by adding liquid while scraping the pan. Especially when making a sauce or gravy.

DEGREASE:

To remove fat from the surface of stews, soups, or stock. This can also be done by placing the liquid in the refrigerator until the fat hardens, so that it can be easily separated.

DEMI-GLACE

A rich brown sauce made from reduced stock.



Cooking Terms *Defined...*

DICE:

To cut food into small cubes of uniform size and shape.

DOT:

To add small pieces or dots of butter on the surface of food, like when making pie.

DREDGE:

To coat food with flour, cornmeal, or breadcrumbs prior to cooking or frying.

DRESS:

To coat foods with sauce, or clean fish, poultry, or game to prepare for cooking.

DRIZZLE:

To stream liquid back and forth over food.

DUST:

To coat food with powdery substances like powdered sugar or cocoa powder.

F

FILLET:

To remove the bones from meat or fish.

FLAKE:

To break food gently into smaller pieces.

FLAMBE:

"To flame" in French. When food is doused in alcohol and lit briefly, causing food to flame.



Cooking Terms Defined...

FLUTE:

To make decorative grooves, such as around the edges of a pie crust.

FOLD:

To gently incorporate a delicate substance, such as egg whites, into another heavier substance, without deflating the air bubbles. This is usually done using a spatula.

FRICASSEE:

Stewed or fried pieces of meat served in a thick white sauce.

G

GLAZE:

To cover food with a thin, glossy coating.

GRATE:

To shred food using a grater.

GRATIN:

A French term for a golden-brown crust made of bread crumbs or grated cheese, formed over an oven-baked dish.

GRILL:

To cook food using a grill.

GRIND:

To reduce food into smaller pieces using a grinder or food processor.



Cooking Terms Defined...

J

JERK:

A term used for island-style barbecued meat or chicken, utilizing a spicy marinade mixture.

JULIENNE:

To cut vegetables, or fruits, into long thin strips.

K

KNEAD:

To work dough with your hands, or a machine, in order to develop the gluten in the flour.

M

MACERATE:

To soften food by soaking in a liquid; usually refers to fruit.

MARINATE:

To infuse food with flavor by soaking it in a flavorful concoction prior to cooking.

MINCE:

To cut food into very small pieces.



Cooking Terms *Defined...*

P

PARBOIL:

To boil until partially cooked.

PARE:

To remove the outermost skin of fruit or vegetables with a paring knife.

PICKLE:

To preserve food such as vegetables, in salty brine.

PINCH:

A small amount, too small to measure, enough to hold between your thumb and forefinger.

PLUMP:

To soak dried fruits in liquid until they swell up.

POACH:

To cook food in a simmering liquid.

PROCESS:

To preserve food by canning.

PROOF:

To allow yeast dough to rise before baking.

PUREE:

To mash food until perfectly smooth by a blender or food processor.

Cooking Terms Defined...

R

REDUCE:

To boil until the volume of a liquid is lessened.

RENDER:

To cook fatty food at a slow rate to melt the fat.

ROAST:

To cook various meats uncovered, in an oven.

ROUX (roo):

A French term for flour and fat mixture, that is cooked to a brown color. Roux is used to thicken sauces.

S

SAUTE:

To cook food in a small amount of hot fat on a stovetop.

SCALD:

To bring a liquid to a temperature just below the boiling point.



Cooking Terms *Defined...*

SCORE:

To make shallow gashes into the surface of food.

SEAR:

To brown meat with intense heat to seal in the juices.

SHRED:

To cut or tear food into smaller pieces.

SIFT:

To run dry ingredients through a sieve or a sifter, to remove lumps or particles.

SIMMER:

To cook liquids slowly over low heat.

SKIM:

To remove impurities from the surface of a liquid during cooking.

STEAM:

To cook food on a rack or basket over boiling water in a covered pot or pan.

STEEP:

To extract color, or flavor from an ingredient, such as tea, by placing it in very hot water.



Cooking Terms *Defined...*

STEW:

To simmer food, while covered, over low heat.

STIR:

To mix ingredients with a circular motion until thoroughly blended.

SWEAT:

To cook vegetables, such as onions, in fat, over low heat, until translucent.

T

TOSS:

To move ingredients around with a cooking utensil in a lifting motion.

TRUSS:

To secure poultry with string or skewers, so that it retains its shape while cooking.

W

WHIP:

To beat rapidly to incorporate air and produce volume.

Z

ZEST:

To remove citrus peel with a zester.