

# Using Recipes

Recipes can teach a new cook about ingredients, equipment, and important kitchen techniques. As the cook gains confidence, he or she can begin to alter favourite recipes, change quantities, experiment with substitutions, and make changes if something goes wrong.

## Recipe Formats

A recipe is a set of instructions for a particular dish that ensures consistent results every time the dish is made. Recipes are presented in three common formats. A **standard recipe** presents a list of ingredients first, then a set of instructions or preparation steps. A **narrative recipe** is written in paragraphs and introduces ingredients gradually as the preparation steps are explained and discussed. An **active recipe** combines the instructions and ingredients as they are used.

**standard recipe:**

a recipe that presents a list of ingredients first then a set of instructions or preparation steps

**narrative recipe:**

a recipe written in paragraphs that explain how to incorporate the ingredients and methods together

**active recipe:**

a recipe that lists the ingredients directly in instructions

### Sample Standard Recipe

#### Zucchini and Onion Frittata

**Yield:** 4 servings

#### Ingredients

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 625 mL (2 ½ c) chopped zucchini and onions | 30 mL (2 tbsp) chopped flat-leaf parsley |
| 6 eggs                                     | 125 mL (½ c) grated parmesan cheese      |
| 2 mL (½ tsp) pepper                        |  |
| 15 mL (1 tbsp) olive oil                   |  |

#### Method

1. Preheat broiler.
2. Heat oil in a cast-iron skillet. Add onions, zucchini and cook for 5 min.
3. Whisk eggs and pepper and pour into skillet. Cook until almost set.
4. Sprinkle with cheese, then broil for 5 min or until cheese has melted.
5. Garnish with parsley and serve.



**FIGURE 2.29** Zucchini and onion frittata.

### Sample Narrative Recipe

#### Zucchini and Onion Frittata

Preheat broiler. Chop 625 mL (2 ½ c) of zucchini and onions. Heat 15 mL (1 tbsp) olive oil in a cast-iron skillet on medium-high heat, add onions and zucchini, and cook for 5 min. Whisk 6 eggs with 2 mL (½ tsp) pepper. Pour into skillet and cook until almost set. Sprinkle with 125 mL (½ c) grated parmesan cheese and broil for 5 min or until cheese has melted. Garnish with 30 mL (2 tbsp) chopped flat-leaf parsley and serve. Makes 4 servings.

## Sample Active Recipe

### Zucchini and Onion Frittata

Chop and set aside:

625 mL (2 1/4 c) chopped zucchini and onions

Heat 15 mL (1 tbsp) olive oil in a skillet on medium-high heat.

Add vegetables and cook for 5 min.

Whisk together:

6 eggs

2 mL (1/4 tsp) pepper

Pour egg mixture over vegetables in skillet and cook until almost set.

Add 125 mL (1/2 c) grated parmesan cheese and broil for 5 min.

Garnish with:

30 mL (2 tbsp) chopped flat-leaf parsley

Makes 4 servings.

### Parts of a Recipe

A good recipe contains the following elements:

- Title or product name: the name given to the dish presented in the recipe
- Yield: the number of servings or portions that the recipe will produce
- Ingredients: a list of specific amounts of each product used to create the dish, and any pre-preparation of the ingredients necessary
- Preparation/Method: a step-by-step method containing information about preparation techniques, equipment needed to complete the dish
- Cooking time and temperature: in order to produce successful results, a good recipe will indicate the appropriate temperature of the oven or cooking liquid as well as a standard time in which to cook the dish
- Additional information: Recipes may also include the nutritional information per serving, ingredient substitutions, serving suggestions, and garnishes for the dish

### Pause and Think

In your opinion, which recipe format is most user friendly? Choose a recipe in this book or from another source. Identify each of the parts described above in the recipe you chose.

## Preparing to Cook

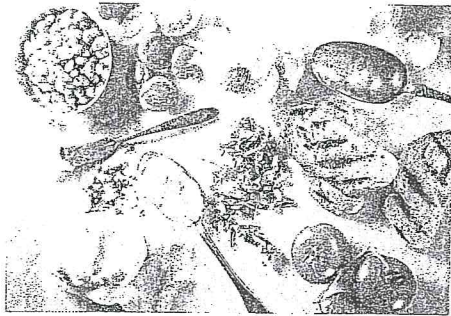
Once you have read through a recipe and visualized the steps involved, it is necessary to assemble all the ingredients and equipment together in a systematic way that allows you to cook efficiently. This step is known as *mise en place*. *Mise en place* may begin several minutes to hours before you begin cooking. For example, if you were preparing a stir-fry, you would clean and chop the vegetables, chop or prepare any meat or tofu, gather all the flavouring components, and possibly even prepare your cookware before you turn on the stove. The preparation of *mise en place* saves time and allows you to follow a recipe without stopping to gather and prepare once you have begun.

*mise en place*:  
(French) to put in place

## When Recipes Fail

Despite every effort, sometimes recipes fail. A recipe can fail for various reasons such as incorrect, incorrectly measured, or spoiled ingredients; an inappropriate pan; the wrong cooking time or temperature; cooking at a different altitude, or cooking techniques that are incorrectly applied. For example, if certain ingredients are not incorporated well enough or are over-stirred, the final product can be ruined. Using a different ingredient than the one suggested by the recipe can alter the results. Adding olive oil instead of vegetable oil may change the flavour of a dish. When recipes fail, retrace your steps, make notes, and try again later. If the results are the same on your second attempt, it may be that the quantity of one or more ingredients is listed incorrectly or that the recipe is faulty in some other way.

FIGURE 2.30 Describe a dish that would incorporate the ingredients shown.



## NUTRITION TIPS

There are general guidelines for reading recipes. Baking recipes always call for unsalted butter unless otherwise noted. Sugar means granulated white sugar, and flour means all-purpose flour. All fresh herbs, produce, and fruit should be washed and dried even though the recipe does not list this step.

### THINK CRITICALLY

1. Why is it important to gather ingredients and equipment before you begin cooking?
2. What kind of human errors can cause a recipe to fail?
3. Describe three things other than human error that can go wrong in the process of following a recipe.
4. Choose a recipe from this book or another source. What *mise en place* would you do before beginning to follow the recipe?

## ADAPTING RECIPES

Sometimes we need to adapt the recipes we have. Some of the reasons for adapting recipes include

- Not having all the ingredients
- Wanting to substitute a healthier ingredient
- Disliking one ingredient and wanting to substitute a different one
- Being allergic to an ingredient

Regardless of the reason for the substitution, you need to know how to do it properly to create a successful product. Let's look more closely at a few adaptations.

### Increasing Fibre

You can increase fibre in a recipe by using whole-grain flour instead of white flour. However, keep in mind that some recipes do not adapt well to whole wheat flour. It is better to use whole wheat in a muffin mix rather than in a cake mix, for example. If a recipe calls for white rice, you can substitute high-fibre brown rice. You can also add fibre as a topping in the form of nuts, seeds, or beans. Cereal grains such as oats, bran, or wheat germ can be added to cookies or used in ground meat mixtures.

### Decreasing Fat

Most recipes can be adapted to reduce the fat. One simple way to reduce fat when cooking is to change the cooking method. Instead of frying meat, try grilling it or broiling it. Use low-fat or no-fat versions of ingredients such as milk and yoghurt. Use low-fat mayonnaise and low-fat salad dressings, or substitute lemon juice or flavoured vinegar for salad dressings. Change meat choices from high fat to lower fat. Substitute two egg whites for a whole egg, or use a lower-fat egg substitute. All these methods will help reduce the amount of fat in recipes.

### Decreasing Sodium

Look for lower-sodium choices of ingredients. Soup bases or broths are available in lower-sodium versions. Reading the label will enable you to determine the better choice. Instead of using salt to enhance flavour, try using spices or herbs. Never add uncalced-for salt to foods during cooking. If people want more salt in their meals, they can add it themselves at the table.

## Changing Quantity

Recipes are designed to produce a certain quantity or yield. Sometimes that quantity is too much or too little for your purpose. Most recipes can easily be doubled, but it is more difficult to cut back a recipe, especially one involving baking. Follow these simple steps to change the quantity of a recipe.

1. Decide what quantity you want to make.
2. Multiply or divide the amount of each ingredient using the same formula. If you want more, then you multiply; if you want less, then you divide. For example, if you wanted half as much, all ingredients would be divided by two. If you wanted twice as much, all ingredients would be multiplied by two.
3. Be sure to change the size of the equipment you will be using as well. Choose the appropriate-sized pan for the job. Because baking times will vary, adapt pan sizes only when necessary. For example, if you are doubling a recipe, use two of the pans recommended for the original quantity, rather than one larger pan.

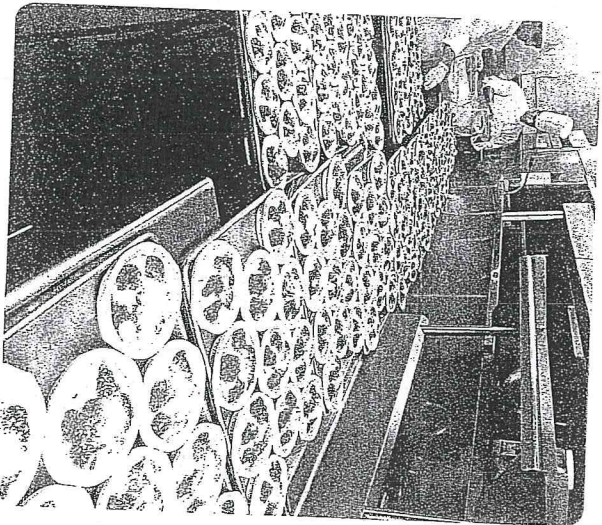


FIGURE 12-5 Do you know how to adapt a recipe to feed a large crowd?



Whole wheat flour can be substituted for white or unbleached flour by up to one-half of the amount in a recipe, but it will produce a denser result. It is not advisable to use whole wheat flour in cake or pastry recipes as it will affect the texture.

## Recipe Usage

The first time you prepare a dish, it is imperative that you follow the recipe. Not only does it help you to develop an organized routine in the kitchen, which is essential for success, but it also allows you to see what changes you need to make for the next time you make it.

Sometimes you may want to alter a recipe for:

### Health Reasons:

- Increase the amount of whole grain to increase the fibre content;
- Decrease the amount of fat;
- Reduce the amount of sugar. (Note: the amount of sugar in baked goods can often be reduced by 20-25%, and you will still obtain a desirable product);
- Reduce the amount of salt (sodium).

### Flavour Improvement:

- You may want, for example, to make a dish more or less spicy.

### Accommodate Dietary Restrictions:

- Perhaps someone is allergic to an ingredient. Sometimes simple substitutions can be made that may even improve the flavour or texture of the recipe!

### Substitution of Ingredients that You Don't Have on Hand.

- For example, if you don't have cream on hand, you could use evaporated milk instead.

### Reducing or Increasing the Amount of Food Produced:

- Please note that not all recipes are designed to be doubled, tripled or halved.
- Products like jam, bread, cookies, muffins, custards, and other baked goods have a specific formula that must be followed in order to achieve maximum success.
- Other products like soups, stews, stir-fries, etc., can be altered to suit your taste.

## YOUR TASK:

Create a user guide for a recipe that you have cut out from one of the magazines in class. Your user guide must include the following:

- Colour code the key parts of your recipe using a legend.
- An estimate of the time required to complete this recipe – explain how long you think each step will take.
- Information or tips that might help someone to follow this recipe better.
- A list of three modifications that could be made to this recipe, and how you would accomplish the modifications. Consider health reasons, flavour improvement and various dietary restrictions.
- Show how you would either double or halve the recipe.
- Identify the format of the recipe (narrative, standard, active) and explain the user-friendliness of the recipe you chose.

## Recipe Readiness



Category	Grade	Comments
<p><b>Knowledge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All parts of the recipe are labeled correctly</li> <li>- The recipe is doubled or halved correctly</li> <li>- Correctly identifies the recipe format</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Thinking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Estimated time makes sense and is well explained</li> <li>- Tips provided are useful and connects with course content</li> <li>- Modifications make sense and are well thought out and explained</li> <li>- Ideas for user-friendliness of the recipe make sense and are thorough</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Communication:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas are clear and well organized. Correct spelling and grammar are utilized</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Application:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student is able to effectively apply course content to a real recipe</li> <li>- The legend is clear and helpful</li> </ul>		

