



Recipe Booklet



Cooking & Eating Good Food

Funded by Action Against Hunger

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Why don't people Cook from Scratch?

There is no denying take-outs are tasty and convenient. But cutting down on processed foods and meals out, is good for your wallet, waistline and will knock around a tenth off your food carbon footprint.

Spending £3 on shop-bought lunches every working day adds up to a staggering £33,750 over your working life! The recommended amount of saturated fat a woman can consume in a day is 20g, 30g for a man. Too much can lead to heart and circulatory diseases. A typical Chinese takeaway can contain more than 17g of fat. And what's more, takeaway wrappers and packages add up to a mountain of waste. Follow our inspiring tips:

Luverly lunches With a little planning and imagination, you can be the envy of work colleagues by taking in homemade 'ready-mades', which could even be leftovers from your evenings meals. Pasta with sundried tomatoes, pesto and asparagus and garlic bread reheats in the microwave in a few minutes, as do Veggie chilli and Spicy potato wedges. Try Veggie cottage pie, Vegetable jalfrezi with pitta bread, or a wholesome soup. You could even round it off with a nice 'leftover' pud, such as apple and plum crumble.

Out cold

If you have no facilities to reheat food choose rice, cous-cous, pasta, bulgar wheat or any grain salads. Although soups and stews will keep hot in a wide-mouthed food flask, meaning you can have hot, fresh food ready to eat!

Forward plan

Batch cook and freeze meals like soups, stews, chilli, curries – even pulses and wholegrains – in portion-sized containers. On nights when you can't be bothered, you'll have your own ready meals that will be ready in the time it would take for a takeaway to be delivered. You control exactly what goes in, and can keep levels of salt and fat to a minimum. It's easy to forget what's in your freezer, so a pack of labels and a good pen/indelible marker is invaluable. It only takes a second or two!

Oops, I did it again...

If you do end up falling for the takeaway route, don't bin the leftovers. Have them for lunch the next day, too. Taking your own tiffin container to the restaurant, or a couple of their plastic tubs from last time, will also save on all those disposable takeaway cartons. No-one can afford to waste any more packaging. Just re-Use what you've got.

Fish Pie

- 450g skinless, boneless fish (mixture of white and oily fish)
- 500g potatoes
- 2 tablespoons frozen peas
- 275ml semi skimmed milk
- 20g plain flour or corn flour
- Mixed herbs
- Black Pepper
- 2 bay leaves (optional)
- 1 tablespoon of grated mature cheddar cheese
- 100g seasonal green vegetables
- Half a medium onion

Method

1. Put the potatoes on to boil, simmer for approximately 15 minutes.
2. Drain the potatoes and then mash with 25ml of the milk, season with black pepper.
3. Peel the onion and finely dice.
4. Put the fish fillets, remaining milk, chopped onion, herbs and bay leaves into a pan and heat gently for about 8 minutes, do not boil.
5. When the fish is cooked, use a slotted spoon to take the fish and onions out and put into an oven proof dish, using a fork, gently break the fish up into pieces
6. Leave the milk in the pan for the sauce but remove the bay leaves (do not eat these).
7. Boil or steam the peas and green vegetables for about 5 minutes, depending on the size of the pieces, drain and then add these to the ovenproof dish.
8. When the milk has cooled down, whisk in the corn flour and over a medium heat, bring gradually to simmering point, whisk until the sauce has thickened then continue cooking on the lowest heat for 5 minutes.
9. Pour the sauce over the fish and vegetables. Scoop the mashed potato over the fish mix. Sprinkle with the cheese and bake in a hot oven 200°C/gas 6 for 20 -25 minutes or until golden brown.

Minestrone Soup

- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 red onion
- 2 carrots
- 2 sticks of celery
- 1 courgette
- 1 small leek
- 1 large potato
- 1 x 400 g tin of cannellini beans
- 2 rashers of higher-welfare smoked streaky bacon OR teaspoon of smoked paprika
- olive oil
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 2 x 400 g tins of plum tomatoes
- 1 litre organic vegetable stock
- 1 large seasonal green, such as savoy cabbage, curly kale, chard
- 100 g wholemeal pasta OR noodles
- ½ a bunch of fresh basil, optional
- Parmesan cheese

Method

1. Peel and finely chop the garlic and onion, scrub and dice the potato.
2. Trim and roughly chop the carrots, celery and courgette, then add the vegetables to a large bowl.
3. Cut the ends off the leek, quarter it lengthways, wash it under running water, then cut into 1 cm slices. Add to the bowl.
4. Drain the cannellini beans, then set aside.
5. *Finely slice the bacon – if using*
6. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat.
7. If using, add the bacon and fry gently for 2 minutes, or until golden.
8. Add the garlic, onion, carrots, celery, courgette, leek, oregano and bay and cook slowly for about 15 minutes, or until the vegetables have softened, stirring occasionally.
9. Add the potato, cannellini beans and plum tomatoes, then pour in the vegetable stock. Stir well, breaking up the tomatoes with the back of a spoon.
10. Add the smoked paprika then cover with a lid and bring everything slowly to the boil, then simmer for 30 minutes, or until the potato is cooked through.
11. Remove and discard any tough stalks bits from the greens, then roughly chop.
12. Using a rolling pin, bash the pasta/noodles into pieces while it's still in the packet or wrap in a clean tea towel.

Mustard Chicken and Winter Veg Casserole

- 1 tbsp (vegetable or sunflower
- 4 chicken thigh fillets,
- Streaky bacon diced.
- (optional/ smoked paprika as an alternative)
- 1 Can butter beans.
- 1 large onion (approx. 150g)
- 1 large carrot (approx. 100g)
- 1 swede
- Spring greens
- 1 teaspoon English mustard
- 500ml chicken or vegetable stock
- a handful of fresh parsley,
- 1 tsp mixed dried herbs
- 200ml natural yoghurt single or double cream

Method

1. Heat oil in a medium-sized non-stick saucepan and put in the chicken. If using thighs, drumsticks or breasts with skin on, place them in skin side down.
2. Cook for 5 minutes on each side on a medium heat to seal.
3. If using bacon, chop it into 1cm chunks and toss into the pot with the chicken.
4. Peel and chop the onion and wash and slice the carrot and add to the pan. If using tinned carrots, simply drain and tip in.
5. Stir the mustard into the stock and pour into the pan to cover the vegetables and half-cover the chicken.
6. Finely chop the parsley and thyme and add to the pot.
7. Cover with a lid and cook for 20 to 30 minutes until the chicken is cooked through.
8. Remove the chicken and stir the cream into the sauce in the pan.
9. Boil rapidly for a few minutes to thicken the sauce.
10. If using yoghurt rather than cream, then add it off the heat after reducing the sauce – it will split and curdle if added on the heat. Still edible but doesn't look great. If you're nervous about splitting the sauce, pour the yoghurt into a bowl and add a few teaspoons of the hot sauce to the yoghurt. Stir well, and repeat, until the yoghurt-sauce-mix is warm, then pour over the chicken and stir through.

Top Tips: green beans make a great addition to this dish – in fact, chuck in any vegetables that are kicking around. As a rule of thumb, add root veg shortly

after browning the chicken and add small veg like peas, shredded greens or green beans 5 minutes before serving. For a veggie version, replace the chicken with beans and put in more veg as required.

Pasta with mushroom and cheese sauce

- 15-20 mushrooms (sliced)
- 4 slices of ham (cut into thin strips)
- 1 onion (sliced)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable or groundnut oil
- 40 g plain flour
- 40g butter or margarine
- 1 pint milk
- Pepper
- 150-200g strong flavoured cheese, cheddar is good

1. Add a small amount oil to a frying pan on medium heat, then add the onions and stir until softened and have a little colour.
2. Add the mushrooms and cook until they have colour and are nice and soft. Take off the heat once cooked.

Meanwhile make the sauce

1. Melt butter in the pan, add the flour to form a roux and cook for a few minutes.
2. Gradually whisk in the milk and cook for 10 minutes until you have a thick, smooth sauce. Stir in the cheese until it is all melted. Season with pepper (you should not need any salt as there is plenty in the cheese)
3. Stir in the cooked mushrooms and onions from the frying pan and add in the ham.
4. Make sure it is all heated through.
5. Pour the sauce onto cooked pasta and stir through, you can do this on a low heat to ensure everything stays hot.
6. Divide up into bowls and serve with steamed or boiled green beans.

Other uses for this sauce

1. Cut out the ham for a veggie version.
2. Add wilted spinach or wilted rocket to the sauce.
3. Cook up a range of vegetables that you have lying around, such as carrots, broccoli, green beans, parsnip, etc, mix with the cheese sauce and cooked pasta and bake in the oven with grated cheese and slices of tomato on the top for 20 minutes

Quesadillas

To make the flour tortilla

800g (1 3/4 lb) plain flour
2 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons baking powder.
1/4 teaspoon salt
350ml (12 fl oz) boiling water.

Method

1. Mix the flour, baking powder and salt in large bowl. Rub in butter to resemble texture of polenta. Add water slowly, mixing with your hands to make a soft dough. You may not need all the water.
2. Knead a few minutes on floured surface until smooth and elastic. Lubricate top with oil, put back in bowl and let rest, covered for 10 minutes.
3. Divide into small balls the size of golf balls and proceed to roll out into size and thickness you prefer.
4. Cook in dry heavy frying pan until top is slightly bubbly then turning on opposite side for a minute or two. Keep stacked and warm inside a clean tea towel.

Refried Beans & Cheese



1 can drained borlotti beans.
Glug olive oil
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp chilli (flakes/powder)
Squeeze lime juice
Chopped coriander.
Sea salt to taste
Grated Cheese

1. Mash all ingredients together in a bowl.
2. Taste and adjust the flavours.
3. Nicely served with cheese in the pancake!

Garlic Mushrooms



2 handfuls mushrooms
2 cloves garlic crushed.
glug of olive oil
1 tbsp chopped parsley
Squeeze lemon juice
Spinach
Feta cheese

1. Pan fry mushrooms in oil with garlic until brown.
2. Add parsley, squeeze over lemon & season.
3. Lay spinach on the pancake, spoon over mushrooms & crumble feta on top.
4. Season with black pepper and roll.

To Make Quesadilla

1. Lay a tortilla in front of you and place a spoonful of mixture, sprinkle cheese on top then fold over the other half of the wrap, flatten the semi-circle with your hand.
2. You can now pan fry 2 quesadillas in one large frying pan with a little oil until golden, which makes 4 portions when sliced in half.

Roast Dinner Left-overs' Pie

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion finely chopped.
- 1 garlic clove, chopped.
- 650g leftover roasted meat, diced.
- 6 tomatoes, diced.
- 150ml chicken stock
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 200g diced leftover vegetables (e.g., carrots, parsnips and sprouts)
- 100g frozen peas
- salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- 450g potatoes
- 25g melted butter.

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onion and chopped garlic. Cook until softened.
2. Add the chopped meat and cook until lightly coloured. Add the tomatoes, pour in the stock and Worcestershire sauce and bring to the boil.
3. Simmer until it starts to thicken, then add the vegetables and peas and return to the boil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and pour into a large pie dish. Allow to cool.
4. Preheat the oven to 200C/Gas 6.
5. Slice the roast potatoes and lay carefully on top of the mixture. Brush with melted butter and bake until hot in the middle and the potatoes are lightly brown, about 20 minutes. Alternatively, boil potatoes until soft and spread over the top of the pie filling then bake to crisp the topping.

The Twist...

- A layer of grated cheese is a popular way of adding a bit more flavour.
- Use mashed pumpkin, sweet potato, parsnips, celeriac or butternut squash in place of or mixed with the potato,
- Use leeks, softened in butter, in place of the onions.
- Use lentils to make this a vegetarian meal

13. To check the potato is cooked, pierce a chunk of it with a sharp knife – if it pierces easily, it's done.
14. Add the greens and pasta to the pan, and cook for a further 10 minutes, or until the pasta is al dente. This translates as 'to the tooth' and means that it should be soft enough to eat, but still have a bit of a bite and firmness to it. Try some just before the time is up to make sure you cook it perfectly.
15. Add a splash more stock or water to loosen, if needed.
16. Pick over the basil leaves (if using) and stir through.
17. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper, then serve with a grating of Parmesan and a slice of wholemeal bread, if you like.

Vegetable Stir Fry with noodles

The ultimate fast food & a way of using up limp veg!

Some key flavours! Grated fresh ginger, crushed garlic and chopped chilli.

Vegetables Grab a selection of vegetables (anything but potatoes really) chop them into thin sticks so that they cook quickly & evenly - e.g. onions, carrots, cabbage, courgette, mushrooms (sliced), spring onions (chunks), celeriac, sweet potato, red pepper, broccoli, green beans, bamboo shoots / water chestnuts (tinned), bean sprouts (leave whole), celery.

Noodles Put some noodles into boiling water to cook. Switch the heat off when it comes to the boil and leave them to cook in the hot water. They only take a few minutes.

A basic method:

1. Heat up a large splash of vegetable oil into a wok or frying pan. Throw in some grated ginger, crushed garlic & chopped chilli (to taste) & cook, constantly stirring, for 30 seconds.
2. Then add the harder vegetables, e.g. carrots, celeriac, cook for 2 minutes, constantly moving them around the wok, then the other veg for a further couple of minutes.
3. Splash some toasted sesame oil and soy sauce over everything, stirring all the time.
4. Add the cooked noodles, mixing everything together.
5. Chopped coriander or spring onions on top go really well too.

Now here are some easy ideas to add more flavours and textures.

Fry a plain omelette and cutting it into strips to add with the noodles/rice.

- Fry strips of meat or prawns along with the vegetables or leftover chopped cooked meat towards the end.
- Add some chopped pineapple for sweetness & crunch.
- Try adding some cashews or peanuts (roasted or plain) once you have fried your vegetables.
- Throw in a shake of Chinese five-spice for more oriental flavour.
- Sprinkle the finished dish with toasted sesame seeds for more crunch.
- Steam rice instead of boiling noodles and pile your stir-fry on the top of your rice.

Vegetable Jalfrezi with rice

Spices

1 heaped teaspoon of cumin seeds
1-2 tablespoons sunflower
1 medium onion, sliced
2-3 sliced garlic cloves,
1 tablespoon of julienned ginger
2 spring onions
1 -2 large green chillies
1 & 1/2 teaspoons of coriander powder
1/2 teaspoon of ground pepper
1/2 teaspoon of turmeric powder
Salt

Other

- 3 Mugs of mixed vegetables sliced and cooked until al-dente (crispy tender) - any seasonal vegetables of your choice.
- 1 can chopped tomatoes or 4-6 fresh tomatoes chopped.
- Salt
- 2 tablespoons of chopped fresh coriander.
- 1 tablespoon of plain yoghurt to garnish-optional.

Method

1. Heat a medium sized pan until hot. Add the cumin seeds and cook them until they pop.
2. Add the oil and then the onion, cook until tender.
3. Next add the garlic, ginger and chilli cook for about a minute.
4. Add the spices and cook for another minute.
5. Then add the tomatoes and salt, bring to the boil, and cook for a further 10 minutes.
6. Add the prepared veg and continue to cook for 10-15 minutes, adding a little water if necessary.
7. Throw in the coriander, stir.
8. Garnish with the yoghurt dip and rice

Simple Pilau Rice, like you get in the restaurants!

1 mug Basmati Rice
1 tsp Turmeric
1 Bay leaf
4 Cardamom Pods

4 Cloves
1 tsp Cumin
1/2 tsp Fennel Seeds
1 3/4 mugs of boiling Water
Pinch of Salt

1. Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan, then stir in all the spices and salt.
2. Stir in the rice until it is coated in butter and spices. Add in the boiling water.
3. Stir once when it comes to the boil, then
4. Cover with a tight fitting lid and simmer for approx. 15 minutes on the lowest heat setting until the water is absorbed.

Health benefits for cooking with herbs and spices..

Herbs and spices not only enhance flavours to our food, but they can add colour too and often replace or reduce salt and sugar intake. Adding oregano, mixed herbs to a white sauce or cumin, turmeric to rice can transform your dish whilst boosting your health!

CORIANDER Anti-inflammatory & Improves digestion.

BAY LEAVES Improves digestion

GARLIC POWDER Keeps blood healthy.

BLACK PEPPER Improves digestion and helps fight infection.

OREGANO Helps to energise & rejuvenate the body.

TURMERIC Powerful anti-inflammatory properties

CRUSHED CHILLI Anti-inflammatory properties and helps prevent acid reflux.

PAPRIKA Anti-inflammatory properties & helps keep eyes healthy.

CUMIN Improves digestion and helps build stronger bones.

CINNAMON Anti-inflammatory properties and lowers blood sugars.

MIXED HERBS High in antioxidants

CHILLI POWDER Anti-inflammatory properties and prevents acid reflux.

Cook more efficiently – Pay less!

- Reduce the cost of cooking – did you know that if you bring potatoes, rice or pasta to the boil in a pan, it will then cook just as quickly if you turn the heat off and leave the lid on as it would if you kept the water boiling?
- Electricity is 3 times more expensive than gas so cook on gas if possible, to save fuel costs.
- Make double quantities of a meal and store the extra in the fridge or freezer for another day. You'll save on cooking costs.
- If you're putting the oven on, try and cook a number of things at once to make the most of the energy, either as part of the same meal or to chill or freeze for another day.
- Heating things up in a microwave uses less energy.

Cracking Good Food launched in 2010, with the aim of encouraging and supporting more people to cook affordable, seasonal and nutritious homemade food from scratch.

Driven by our belief that EVERYONE deserves good food, our mission is simple: to work collaboratively with others to eradicate food poverty and increase food sustainability in Greater Manchester. We enthuse, encourage, and teach individuals and groups how to source and cook affordable, healthy, and tasty food from scratch, whilst minimising both food waste and our environmental impact.

We do this by delivering accessible and empowering cooking courses and training, as part of a wider campaign for affordable, sustainable & healthier food for all. During Covid we have produced & delivered over 58,000 meals which have been redistributed across Greater Manchester by 30 community groups.

Throughout all of our work, we strive to show by example that eating sustainably and seasonally is both possible and affordable.

A non-profit social enterprise



'Everyone deserves good food'