



Cooking the Perfect Steak from www.steakitout.com

Cooking the Perfect Steak

The perfect steak can be a reality, the following techniques will make the difference between an ordinary steak and a great steak. 'Steak' like no other ingredient is the food of dreams (well maybe daydreams).

How often have you heard "I was just thinking about steak for dinner" or "Remember the steak we had at that restaurant? It was so delicious, just perfect, I wish I could cook a steak like that at home?"

Steak too is the one thing that many home cooks can be intimidated about cooking. Many are unsure about which steaks to choose, how to prepare and cook them and how to tell when 'it's done'.

The techniques, tips and hints in this .pdf will answer all of these questions and more. They will show you how to cook the best steaks ever! We hope to inspire you to cook great steaks...serve them with an easy sauces or delicious flavored butters. Perfectly cooked steaks need very little else.

Cooking Tips

- Heat the barbecue or the pan before you add the steak. The steak should sizzle as it makes contact with the heat. Preheat the barbecue to hot. If you're cooking a thick steak (or like your steak well done) move it to a cooler part of the barbecue or lower the heat to moderately-high as it cooks. Preheat the pan to moderately-hot. Keep the heat moderately-high as you cook.
- Turn the steak once only. Let the steak cook on one side until moisture appears on the surface, then turn it (otherwise it will be tough).
- Learn to test your steaks for doneness. There's a tendency by many of us to overcook steaks. Leave them just a little longer than needed on the heat (to ensure they're 'cooked enough'). Knowing when your steak is ready to be

removed from the heat is the key to a perfectly cooked steak. Remember too, resting is just as important as cooking...rest your steaks (for a couple of minutes) before serving and they will be moist and tender.

Cook to order:

Rare

Cook for a few minutes per side, depending on thickness. Turn once only. Cook until steak feels very soft with the back of your tongs.

Medium-Rare

Cook on one side until moisture is just visible on the top surface. Turn once only. Cook on the other side until surface moisture is visible. Steak will be cooked to medium-rare when it feels soft with the back of your tongs.

Medium

Cook on one side until moisture is pooling on the top surface. Turn once only. Cook on the other side until moisture is visible. Steak will be cooked to medium when it feels springy with the back of your tongs.

Medium-well

Cook on one side until moisture is pooling on the top surface. Turn and cook on the other side until moisture is pooling on top. Reduce heat slightly and continue to cook until steak feels firm with the back of your tongs.

Well done

Cook on one side until moisture is pooling on the top surface. Turn and cook on the other side until moisture is pooling on top. Reduce heat slightly and continue to cook until steak feels very firm with the back of your tongs.

Judging a Steak's Degree of Doneness by Touch

- Make a circle with your index finger and thumb and apply a little pressure to the centre of the ball on the palm side of your thumb, it will feel very soft. With either your fingertip or the back of your tongs, press the centre of the steak. If it has the same soft texture, it is rare.
- Move your thumb to the middle finger and press the ball of your thumb again; steaks with the same soft feel will be medium-rare.
- The ring finger and thumb together will indicate a medium doneness.

- The little finger and thumb together will be very firm; if a steak feels the same it will be well done.

How long to marinate?

Refrigerate the marinating steaks unless you are going to cook the steaks within 10 minutes or so. Steaks can marinate for 12 to 24 hours covered in the fridge. Remember the marinade will not reach the centre of the steaks it will simply add flavor to the outer surface.

How to Cook Steaks that have been Marinated

- Take the steaks from marinade and lightly pat them with absorbent paper before placing them in the pan or on the barbecue. If you don't do this the steaks will not brown well.
- Don't pour marinade over steaks while they're cooking, this makes them stew and causes flare-ups.
- To keep the steaks moist you can brush them with a little of the marinade as they cook. Don't brush it on the steak once it has been turned (This can cause health problems).

Easy marinade ideas

- The marinade does not need to cover the steaks completely. You'll need about half a cup of marinade to flavor 500g of meat, turn the steaks while they're in the marinade.
- Be mindful of the sugar content of the mixture, as marinades high in sugar will burn before the steak is cooked.
- Go easy on the salt too. Too much salt or salty ingredients like soy sauce will leech out the meat's juices making the steaks dry.

Use what you have in the cupboard and fridge

Good combos include:

- Soy sauce, a little honey and orange juice
- Tomato sauce, a little red wine vinegar and Dijon mustard
- Olive oil, a little lemon juice and dried or fresh oregano and/or rosemary/thyme
- Soy sauce, oyster sauce and sesame oil
- For the fastest flavor boost of all, use a purchased vinaigrette dressing, one with herbs and garlic and brush it over the steak as it cooks. Pour the dressing onto the steak, do not pour into a bowl and then return the dressing to the bottle. That is a health hazard.

- Take the steaks from the refrigerator about 10 minutes before you cook them. If your steaks have had a little of the chill removed they will cook evenly and brown well. Cold steaks placed on a hot surface can tighten and toughen (then they tend to stew). Be sensible though and mindful of safe food practice – meat must not be kept out of the fridge for any length of time. Ten minutes is enough.

Keep the Seasoning Simple

- Use freshly ground black pepper and sea salt flakes.
- Lightly season both sides of the steak just before you cook it.

Steak Cooking Tips

- Lightly oil the meat and not the barbecue plate or the pan. Do this and your steak won't stick, and you won't have the problem of the oil burning as the steaks cook, or flare-ups on the barbecue.
- Always use tongs to turn the steaks. A fork will pierce the meat, robbing it of its juiciness and flavor. Spring loaded, scalloped edged tongs are just what you need. Barbecue tongs (with heat resistant handles) need to be about 30cm in length.
- Don't crowd the steaks on the barbecue or in the pan. This reduces the heat and the meat will then release juices and begin to stew, making the steaks tough.
- Don't cut the steaks with a knife to test if they're ready. Test the steaks with tongs. Rare is soft when pressed, medium is springy and well done is very firm .
- Always rest the steaks after they come off the heat. The steak will be juicier and tastier. Cover the steaks loosely with foil and rest for 2 to 4 minutes (time will depend on their thickness). It's a good idea to take the steaks from the heat just shy of the degree of doneness goal. The resting time then allows the steak to complete cooking itself and the juices to set.