

# Food \$ense

Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program

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<http://fyi.uwex.edu/foodsense/>

**UW**  
**Extension**  
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## Use a Recipe or Wing It?

Recipes give exact information on ingredients and directions for cooking a dish. They are very helpful when making baked goods. Small changes in a cake recipe (such as baking soda) could mean a flat cake.

Many dishes can be made without a recipe. Soup can be made by mixing and cooking a protein food, vegetables, liquid, seasonings, and other desired ingredients. The type and amount of each ingredient will control the flavor, texture and amount of the end product. Adjust the flavor or texture of your dish along the way by adding more water or seasoning.

For example:

**Chicken** (protein food) + **onion, carrots** (vegetables) + **chicken broth** (liquid) + **salt, pepper** (seasonings) + **noodles** = a mild flavored, chicken noodle soup

**Red beans** (protein food) + **onion, chili pepper, tomatoes** (vegetables) + **water** (liquid) + **cumin** (seasoning) = a spicy chili

Learn basic food preparation skills. Buy a cook book such as *The Joy of Cooking* or *Better Homes and Gardens* at a thrift store for simple cooking tips.



Find good recipes through online sources such as the SNAP-Ed Connection cooking section, <https://snap.nal.usda.gov/resource-library/handouts-and-web-sites/cooking> or check the Food \$ense FYI site for ideas.

Contact your UW-Extension office with questions or for more information.

### Vegetable Pasta Soup

*A simple "dump" soup recipe that freezes well.*

- 1 Tablespoon oil (canola or vegetable)
- 4 cups vegetables (like onions, carrots, and zucchini), chopped or sliced
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning or dried basil
- 2 cups small whole wheat pasta (shell or macaroni)
- 6 cups fresh spinach leaves (about 1/2 pound)

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add onions and carrots. Cook until the vegetables are softened (about 3 minutes). Stir often.
2. Stir in zucchini and canned tomatoes. Cook 3-4 minutes. Stir in the broth, water, salt, and Italian seasoning or dried basil. Bring to a boil.
3. Stir in the pasta and spinach. Return to a boil. Cook until the pasta is tender using the time on the package for a guide.



Source: Iowa State University Extension

## Ingredient Substitutions

Have you ever been in the middle of making a recipe and realize you are missing an ingredient? These substitutions may just save you from ruining the recipe or help you avoid an extra trip to the store!



- **Mayonnaise** (1 cup) = sour cream or plain yogurt (1 cup)
- **Garlic** (1 clove) = 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- **Buttermilk** (1 cup) = 1 cup milk + 1 Tablespoon white vinegar
- **Tomato Juice** (1 cup) = 1/2 cup tomato Sauce + 1/2 cup water
- **Tomato Soup** (10.75 oz. can) = 1 cup tomato sauce + 1/4 cup water

For a printable list of ingredient substitutions, go to: [food.unl.edu/documents/IngredientSub.pdf](http://food.unl.edu/documents/IngredientSub.pdf)

Source: *University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*

## Nutrition Basics

Every five years, a new edition of the Dietary Guidelines is published. The purpose is to provide recommendations for Americans on healthy eating patterns to promote health and prevent chronic disease.

### Key Recommendations

- **Vegetables**—Eat a variety of vegetables, dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other.
- **Fruit**—Eat a variety of fruits, especially whole fruits.
- **Grains**—Consume at least half of all grains as whole grains.
- **Dairy**—Increase intake of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages.
- **Protein**—Choose a variety of protein foods, which include seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.
- Limit saturated fats, *trans* fats, added sugars and sodium.

Source: *Dietary Guidelines 2015-2020*

## Easy Roasted Vegetables

*Try this recipe in the oven or on the grill.*

5 cups assorted vegetable pieces cut in chunks, (potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, turnips, carrots, onions, mushrooms, asparagus)  
1 tablespoon oil (canola or vegetable)  
2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning  
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/8 teaspoon salt

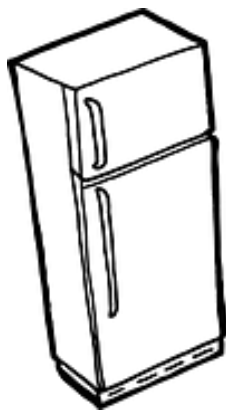
1. Heat oven to 425°F. Line a 9"x13" pan with aluminum foil or create a foil packet for use on the grill.
2. Spread vegetables in pan or in foil packet. Sprinkle oil on vegetables. Stir. Sprinkle with Italian seasoning, pepper, and salt. Stir. For grill—Fold sides of foil together tightly to seal.
3. Bake uncovered 45 minutes. Turn every 15 minutes. **OR** Grill over medium-high heat about 15-20 minutes or 8-10 minutes on High. Turn once.
4. Serve hot. Open grill packet carefully to allow steam to escape.



Source: *Iowa State University Extension*

## Freshen up the Fridge

When you're in the mood for spring cleaning, don't forget the refrigerator! An organized and clean refrigerator means less searching for food, making meal prep easier and faster. Writing a grocery list prevents buying food you don't need, which means less food (and less money!) is wasted. Your risk of foodborne illness is lower because foods will stay colder, raw meats will not drip on to other foods, and there is less risk of spoilage.



### Five steps to a cleaning a refrigerator:

1. Turn off the refrigerator and unplug.
2. Remove everything. Discard old or spoiled food. Perishable food should be placed in a cooler to keep it cold.
3. Remove shelves and drawers; wash with hot soapy water, rinse with clean water, and dry.
4. Wipe inside interior and bottom of refrigerator. Replace shelves and drawers. As you put back the food, wipe off the jars and containers.
5. Wipe exterior to remove dirt and lint.
6. Plug the refrigerator back in!

For more helpful tips on how to clean and organize your refrigerator, check out [www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings).

Source: *Iowa State University Extension*

## MyPlate Tip

Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.



## Dear Sue Keeney...

Meet Sue Keeney--your source of research-based information about nutrition and health! Readers of all ages like Sue's practical tips on eating for good health, stretching the food dollar & more!

Submit your question to Sue Keeney at [fyi.uwex.edu/foodsense/ask-sue-keeney/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/foodsense/ask-sue-keeney/)



Dear Sue,

There is so much information out there about healthy eating and how much exercise we need. It is hard to know what to believe. I thought I was supposed to be following the Food Pyramid but now all I can find is something that looks like a plate. Which one is it? Where should I go to find accurate, up-to-date information?

Wanda Behellthy

Dear Wanda,

You are right, there is a lot of information out there about what it means to be healthy and it can be difficult to know what to believe. USDA's MyPyramid was transformed into MyPlate a few years back and illustrates the five food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Grains, Protein and Dairy using a familiar image — a place setting for a meal.

MyPlate encourages you to think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. The hope is that the Plate is much easier to understand and follow than the Pyramid.

You can find pictures of MyPlate along with many other fantastic, reliable resources at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov). This website also has interactive tools for eating on a budget, physical activity, weight and calories, among many other topics to help you make healthy choices.

Sue

Source: [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)

## Enjoy the Benefits of Gardening

Gardening is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, grow nutritious fruits and vegetables, and get physical activity. Consider these suggestions to get the most out of gardening:



### **Be active for at least 2 ½ hours a week.**

Include activities that raise your breathing and heart rates and that strengthen your muscles.

### **Add physical activity gradually.**

Start out with just a few minutes of physical activity each day. Gradually build up time.

### **Drink more fluids.**

Water will help you stay hydrated, especially if you're outside in hot weather.

### **Vary your gardening activities.**

This will keep you interested and increase the benefits of gardening.

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

## *Kids in the Kitchen...*

Birthdays and holidays are precious times which often include treats. Consider a healthier alternative to the cupcake for an upcoming birthday party, classroom treat, or picnic.



Ideas are easy to find on Pinterest or Facebook. Here are a few winners:

- Fruit kabobs on seasonal toothpicks or skewer sticks.
- Combine vegetables and cheese, arranged in the shape of the season (Ex. turkey or heart).
- Whole pieces of fruit as a natural sweet treat.

Look for more great ideas on cutting back on sweets at [www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips)

Source: *Cut Back on Your Kid's Sweet Treats, Choose MyPlate 10 Tips Educational Series*

WNEP education is supported by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), UW-Extension, FoodShare Wisconsin, and local partners. In Wisconsin, FoodShare can help provide a healthy diet. To find out more about FoodShare, call \_\_\_\_\_ or go to <http://access.wisconsin.gov>. To learn more about the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program in your county, please contact:

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Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the **State Information/Hotline Numbers** (click the link for a listing of hotline numbers by State); found online at [http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/contact\\_info/hotlines.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/contact_info/hotlines.htm).

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