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**Contributors**

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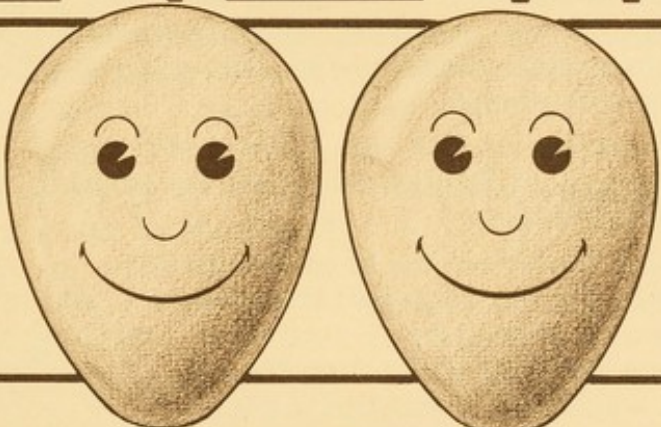
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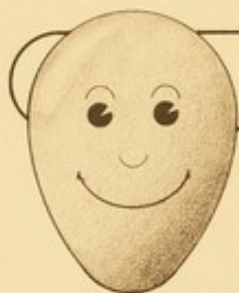
NEW

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EGGS





## WHAT MAKES UP AN EGG?

Did you know that eggs are one of the most complete, naturally produced foods? They give us protein, for growth and strength, a balanced amount of fat, for energy, and a small amount of carbohydrate. Eggs contain most of the vitamins required to regulate body processes, and a wide range of essential minerals, including iron and calcium. They are one of the cheapest forms of protein available and are also highly versatile. Many people, however, do not know how to make the most of them.

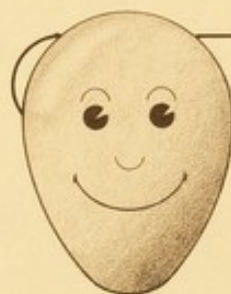
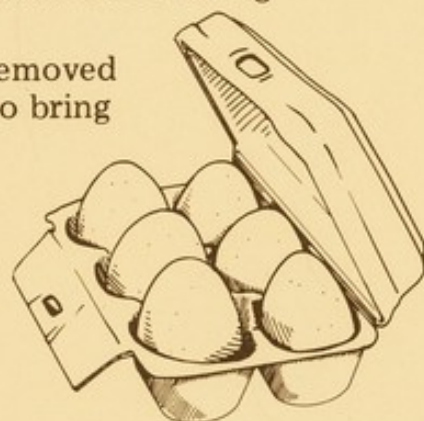


## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF EGGS

Eggs should always be stored in a cool place or in the refrigerator to keep them fresh. Keep eggs in their box, pointed end downwards to prevent breakage, reduce evaporation and help to stop the absorption of odours and flavours from other strong smelling foods in the refrigerator.

Best results can be achieved with eggs if they are removed from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes before use to bring them up to room temperature.

Fresh eggs keep for about two weeks so check the 'sell by' date before purchasing. To test an egg for freshness, make a brine solution (1 pint/60ml cold water to 2 tbsps. salt). Carefully drop the egg in. If really fresh it will lie on its side but if it's very stale it will float to the top.



## EGG COOKING TIPS

### EGG SIZES

Eggs come in seven sizes from size 1 which weigh 70g and over, to size 7 weighing under 45g. Most recipes, unless they state otherwise, use size 3 eggs.

### BOILED EGGS

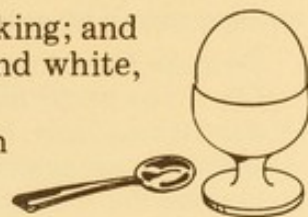
Egg shells can crack if they are plunged into fast boiling water - if this happens sprinkle a little salt on the crack.

To help prevent cracking try one of the following techniques: place eggs into cold water and time from boiling point; or carefully prick the blunt end of the egg before cooking, adding a little vinegar to the water.



Plunging hard-boiled eggs into cold water stops them cooking; and also helps to prevent a black line forming around the yolk and white, as well as making the eggs easier to shell.

Hard-boiled eggs do not freeze well as they become tough and rubbery.



## SCRAMBLED EGGS

To make scrambled eggs fluffier add a little water before cooking. Do not over-cook the eggs or they will become watery and separate.

## POACHING

Most people believe that eggs cooked in a 'poaching pan' are poached - in fact eggs cooked in this fashion are steamed. Real poached eggs are made by filling a frying pan 4cm (1½ inch) deep with salted water and bringing it to simmering point. Break each egg into a cup and slide in to the water one at a time and poach for 2-3 minutes.

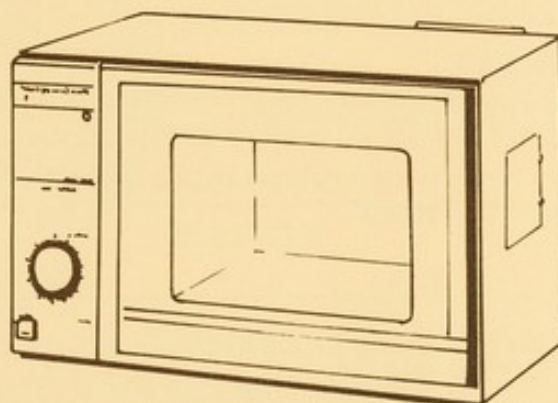
## FRIED EGGS

Fried eggs don't have to be fattening! If cooked in a non-stick pan with a minimum of fat, a size 3 egg contains only 100-120 calories, depending upon how well the fat is drained from the cooked egg.

## MICROWAVE EGGS

With some high wattage microwaves it is best to cook eggs on a medium setting rather than full power. If overcooked they become tough and watery.

When poaching or frying eggs in the microwave, prick the yolks with a cocktail stick before cooking to prevent them exploding and cover with kitchen paper.



Remember to remove eggs from the microwave just before they have cooked completely. Leave them to stand for 1-2 minutes to allow them to equalise.

Never cook an egg in its shell in the microwave unless it is completely wrapped in foil and submerged in a bowl of water covered in cling film (always ensure that the eggs do not touch the sides of the bowl). The amount of water must always be greater in volume than the amount of food. For example, allow 1 pint/600ml water for four eggs, otherwise the contents of the egg will cook too quickly, build up pressure and explode.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CAKES

\* Always keep the oven door closed while the cake is cooking or the influx of cold air as the door opens will cause the cake to collapse.

\* Make sure that you are using the correct sized tin - if the tin is too small the mixture will rise to the top and keep rising, but without the support of the tin it will collapse.



\* If using a table-top electric mixer be careful not to over-cream the butter and sugar - the mixture should be a fluffy, creamy and pale consistency but not completely white - over-creaming can cause the cake to drop when baking.

\* Remember that self-raising flour has a short shelf-life - in a damp kitchen it should be used within about three weeks - so try to use plain flour and baking powder where possible.

## MERINGUES

For best results the ideal oven temperature should be 110°/225°F/Gas Mark ¼. If at this temperature you find that the meringues are cooking too fast and browning just keep the oven door a little ajar.

If the oven temperature is too low the meringue mixture will weep giving out a sticky liquid. If the oven temperature is too hot the meringue will start to brown before the mixture has dried.

## TIPS FOR PERFECT HOT SOUFFLÉS

- \* Add herbs, fish, cheese and flavourings before folding in the egg whites.
- \* Add the egg yolks and whites separately.
- \* Whisk up the egg whites in a grease-free bowl and make sure no egg yolk is mixed with the white.
- \* Fold the egg whites into the soufflé mixture with a metal spoon or spatula.
- \* Make sure the dish is the correct size and that the sides are straight.
- \* Pre-heat the oven and do not open the oven door whilst the soufflé is cooking, otherwise it may drop.
- \* Do not fill the dish more than two-thirds full.
- \* **The Golden Rule:** serve immediately once cooked.

## TIPS FOR PERFECT COLD, SWEET SOUFFLÉS

- \* Make sure all the ingredients are weighed out correctly.
- \* Use only the freshest of ingredients.
- \* Make sure the gelatine is dissolved thoroughly.
- \* Whisk the egg and sugar together well until pale, and cream in colour, trebled in volume and very thick and foamy in texture.



## TIPS FOR PERFECT CREAMY MAYONNAISE

If the mixture curdles it is probably due to the oil being poured in too quickly and the egg not being a room temperature. If this happens, don't throw the mixture away - simply break a fresh yolk into the basin and slowly whisk in the curdled mixture.

If the mixture is too thick, just whisk in a little water until the mayonnaise reaches the required consistency.

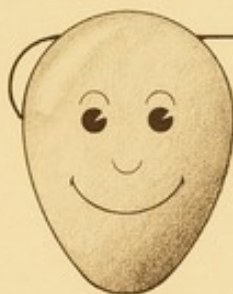
Traditionally, mayonnaise is made from olive oil, but vegetable oil gives a milder-flavoured mixture with a lighter texture.



## LEFT-OVERS

Left-over egg white can be frozen in quantities of two in a freezer container. Cover the surface with a circle of greaseproof paper. Freeze for up to three months. Use any left-over egg white to make other dishes lighter, such as mousses, fruit and vegetable purées and meringues.

Left-over egg yolk should be mixed with either ½ teaspoon of salt or sugar to every three yolks before being frozen. Store in the freezer for up to three months and use for enriching sweet or savoury dishes, glazing foods, binding rissoles, burgers, pastry etc.



## EGG FACTS & FALLACIES

\* Some people believe that brown eggs are more nutritious than white eggs, but the only difference between the two is the colour of the shell - both white and brown eggs contain exactly the same nutrients.

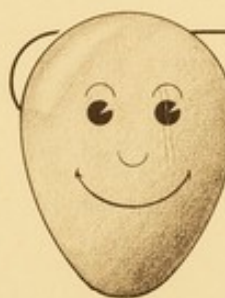
\* Many people have been led to believe that they shouldn't eat too many eggs because they contain cholesterol. Cholesterol is a natural substance present in the blood and too much cholesterol in the blood increases the risk of heart disease. Surprisingly, however, the amount of cholesterol eaten in the diet is now known to have much less importance in increasing blood cholesterol than the amount of saturated fat consumed.

The latest medical research has shown that we can now eat seven eggs a week, while following a healthy low fat, high fibre diet, without increasing the level of cholesterol in the blood.

\* Some people think that eggs are fattening - but an average size 3 egg contains only 82 calories whereas a slice of bread and butter contains 120 calories.

The high protein, low fat combination in eggs means that they make a valuable contribution to a calorie controlled diet.

\* There is an old wives' tale that eggs are 'binding' - but while they are ideal for binding food together in cooking, they are not 'binding' in the digestive sense!



## BEAUTY TIPS

\* For shiny hair, work a beaten egg into your hair using your fingertips. Comb the mixture through the hair, then leave for 10-15 minutes before rinsing thoroughly in cool water. Do not make the water too hot or you will scramble the egg!

\* To make an anti-sunburn cream: blend together one egg white, one teaspoon of honey and ½ teaspoon of witch hazel until it is even and smooth the mixture over the sunburnt area. Always keep the mixture refrigerated.







## HUEVOS RANCHEROS

### Mexican fried eggs

*Serve this spicy Mexican favourite for a late breakfast. The spicy tomato sauce with chillies will really wake you up!*

SERVES 4 - 6

#### Ingredients

6 tortillas, or small round pitta breads or rounds of fried bread

6 eggs

oil for frying

100g/4oz grated cheese

2 ripe avocados cut into slices

#### Sauce

1 medium can tomatoes (400g/14oz)

drained and chopped

1 onion finely chopped

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 teaspoons chilli sauce (adjust to taste)

salt

#### Method

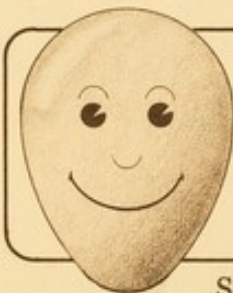
To make the sauce, fry the onion in the oil until soft then add the tomatoes, chilli and salt to taste. Simmer until fairly thick.

Warm the tortillas or pitta bread under the grill.

Fry the eggs.

Place one egg on each tortilla, spoon round some sauce and garnish with slices of avocado and grated cheese.

Serve hot.



## ORANGE AND ALMOND LASAGNE

*A delicious sweet alternative to a conventional pasta dish.*

SERVES 4 - 6

#### Ingredients

6 eggs

225g/8oz. thick Greek natural yoghurt

2 tbsp caster sugar

4 tbsp single cream

1 tbsp cornflour blended with 2 tbsp cold milk

3 oranges, peeled and segmented

50g/2oz. flaked almonds

½ of a 375g/13oz. pkt lasagne sheets, pre-cooked

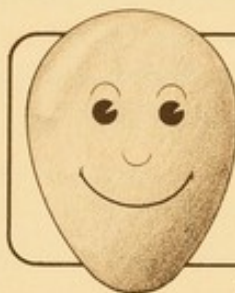
25g/1oz. demerera sugar

#### Method

1. Place the eggs, yoghurt, cream and sugar into a bowl over a saucepan of hot water. Whisk continuously until thickened, this takes about 10 minutes. Blend in the cornflour mixture and cook for a further 2 minutes.

2. In a 18-21cm/7-8inch ovenproof dish, layer the pasta with the egg mixture and the orange segments and almonds, finishing with the egg mixture. Sprinkle the demerera sugar on top.

3. Bake at 150°C/300°F/Mark 2 for 25-30 minutes in a bain-marie or a roasting tin half filled with warm water until just cooked. Just before serving caramelize the sugared top under a pre-heated grill for 3-5 minutes until golden brown.



## EGGS BENEDICT

*A quick and tasty microwave snack.*

SERVES 4

#### Ingredients

4 eggs

4 slices of hot buttered toast, with the crusts off

4 slices ham, approx. the same size as the toast

Water

Hollandaise Sauce

4 tbsp white wine vinegar

4 egg yolks, beaten

4oz/125g butter, cut into pieces

salt and freshly ground black pepper

To Garnish

a few sprigs of dill

#### Method

Place ½ tablespoon of hot water into four ramekin dishes and place in the microwave on full power/high setting until the water boils. Break in each egg and prick each egg yolk with a cocktail stick. Cook for a further 2¼ minutes. Leave to stand for 1½ minutes before draining very carefully. Place the egg



onto a piece of toast topped with the ham.

To make the sauce reduce the vinegar by half or if you prefer use 2 tbsp. freshly strained lemon juice. Put the butter into the vinegar or lemon juice and melt on full power/high for 1-1½ minutes. Slowly, whisk the egg yolks into the butter. Continue to whisk until the sauce has thickened. Season, and serve with Hollandaise sauce poured over the egg.



## ORANGE PICK-ME-UP

*A healthy, frothy drink full of Vitamin C, iron, fibre and protein. Perfect for a speedy breakfast or lunch.*

SERVES 2

### Ingredients

300ml/½ pint fresh, chilled orange juice  
1 banana  
1 tablespoon medium oatmeal  
2 eggs

### Method

Whizz all the ingredients in a liquidiser or processor for 30 seconds until frothy.

Serve in two goblets with a spoon to help eat the oatmeal.



## KAO PAD *Thai Egg Fried Rice*

*One of Thailand's most popular rice dishes, Kao pad can be eaten for any meal, even Thai style for breakfast!*

SERVES 4 - 6

### Ingredients

1 onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves crushed garlic  
4 tablespoons vegetable oil  
225g/8oz. lean pork cut into strips  
4 size 3 eggs, beaten and seasoned with salt and pepper  
approx. 700g/1½lb. cooked long grain rice (about 225g/8oz. dry weight)  
3 tablespoons Nam Pla- Thai fish sauce (or replace with 2 tbsp soy sauce)  
1 tablespoon chilli sauce (adjust according to taste)

1 tablespoon tomato paste  
225g/8oz. cooked prawns  
8 spring onions finely chopped  
Garnish - wedges of lemon, spring onions, chilli peppers

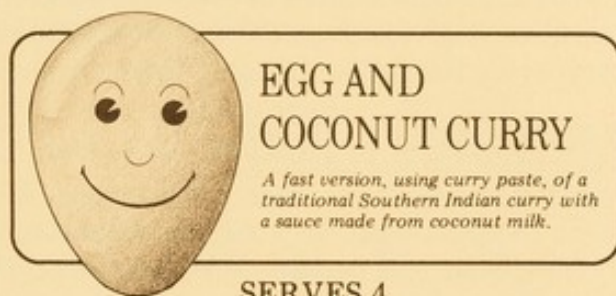
### Method

Heat the oil in a wok or deep saucepan and stir fry the onion and garlic for 3-4 minutes until soft.

Add the pork and cook on a high heat until the meat is no longer pink.

Pour in the eggs and quickly cook as they scramble. Working fast, add the cooked rice, fish and chilli sauces, tomato paste and prawns. Stir until everything is hot and well mixed then add the spring onions just before serving.

Garnish with lemon wedges, spring onions and chilli peppers.



## EGG AND COCONUT CURRY

*A fast version, using curry paste, of a traditional Southern Indian curry with a sauce made from coconut milk.*

SERVES 4

### Ingredients

8 hard boiled eggs  
2 cloves crushed garlic  
1 onion very finely chopped  
4 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons curry paste (vary according to taste)  
1 tablespoon tomato paste  
salt  
300ml/½ pint coconut milk- made up according to packet or can instructions.

### Method

Fry the garlic and onion in oil in a saucepan for 3 minutes until soft.

Stir in the curry and tomato paste and cook for 2-3 minutes, then add a little salt and coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes until the sauce thickens.

Add the hard boiled eggs and let them heat in the sauce for 5 minutes.

Serve with boiled rice and mango chutney.





## SPINACH AND EGG PIZZA

*A colourful and unusual pizza topping.  
For speed, use ready-made pizza bases.*

SERVES 4

### Ingredients

#### Pizza base

either - 225g/8oz. strong bread flour  
150ml/¼ pint warm water  
15g/½oz. dried yeast  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
or - 4 ready made pizza bases

#### Topping

225g/8oz. frozen, finely chopped spinach,  
defrosted  
150g/5oz. full fat soft cheese  
50g/2oz. grated Parmesan  
salt, pepper, nutmeg  
4 size 5 eggs  
olive oil and salt

### Method

**To make the dough:-** Sprinkle the dried yeast and sugar into the warm water and leave to froth for about 10 minutes. Add this mixture to the flour and salt in a bowl and mix until the dough forms a ball, adding more or less water as necessary. Knead for 10 minutes. Either - grease 2 baking trays approx. 28cmx19cm (11"x7") and press half the dough into each tray. Or roll out 4 round pizzas. Leave to rise for about 10 minutes.

**Topping:-** Gently heat together the spinach and soft cheese in a saucepan, stirring until smooth. Add the parmesan, salt, pepper and nutmeg and mix well. Allow to cool.

Spread the spinach mixture over the pizza bases and drizzle over some olive oil and a little salt. Bake in a hot oven 230°C/450°F/ Gas 8 for about 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and carefully crack an egg on top of each pizza or pizza portion. Carry steadily to the oven and cook a further 10 minutes or until the pizza base is firm and the eggs cooked. Ready cooked bases may take less time to cook.



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