

FOOD PROS ANSWER:

What's your best Home Cooking Tip?

“Frequent the Farmers’ Market” If I could tell home cooks one thing, it would be to shop at farmers’ markets. They create communities that value local produce, diversity, honesty, seasonality, sustainability, and beauty. Get to know the people who grow your food. Think of yourself as in partnership with the farmers, learning from them and working with them. Remember food is precious.
—**ALICE WATERS**, owner and founder, *Chez Panisse restaurant and foundation*

“Try Out Oils” Besides olive oil, consider other healthy oils, such as wheat germ, flaxseed, and walnut. They supply nutrients like vitamin E and omega-3 fats. High heat can destroy the nutrients, so lightly drizzle these oils over food for nutty flavor. —**JEREMY BEARMAN**, executive chef at *Rouge Tomate* in New York City



“Trade Onions for Scallions” On busy nights, I rarely peel, slice, chop, and slowly cook an onion for a recipe. Instead, I chop up a handful of scallions. They’re so easy! Also, people who don’t like onions or find them difficult to digest enjoy scallions.
—**NIGELLA LAWSON**, British cook and author of *Nigella Christmas*

“Know Your Meats” After more than five generations in the butcher business, we know that home cooks are baffled when they buy meat. Look for beef with ivory-colored marbling and a dark red hue. Don’t be seduced by the cherry-red steak with no marbling. This will be tasteless and tough. And always buy the best quality you can afford or find. —**STANLEY AND MARK LOBEL**, coauthors of *Lobel’s Meat Bible*

“Save on Gadgets” You don’t need to buy the most expensive kitchen tools. We invested in a \$160 mandoline but later found that a \$13 plastic slicer with a similar metal blade can do many jobs—such as cutting not-too-hard cheese—just as well. —**MARILYNN AND SHEILA BRASS**, authors of *Heirloom Cooking with the Brass Sisters*

PHOTOLIBRARY

“Get Organized” Whether I’m cooking at home or in the restaurant, having a game plan is essential. Measure out all of your spices, chopped herbs, or vegetables and put them in bowls. Organize them in the order they will be used in the recipe. Place your saucepan or skillet on the stove. Once you have all of your tools and ingredients handy, you can get in the kitchen and really have some fun! —**EMERIL LAGASSE**, chef, restaurateur, and author of *Emeril 20-40-60: Fresh Food Fast*



“Experiment with Healthy Baking” You have to make mistakes in order to improve your baking, so don’t be afraid to try new things to make your recipes healthier. When you want to minimize the amount of oil in your cake recipes, you can substitute additional liquid—whether milk or a fruit puree. If a recipe calls for 1 cup oil, the first time use ½ cup oil and ½ cup milk, fruit puree, or applesauce. If that works, then the next time you can try with ¼ cup oil and ¾ cup liquid. —**ANNE BYRN**, author of *The Cake Mix Doctor Returns!*

“Embrace Braising” Lower-priced cuts of high-quality meat become succulent dishes when braised. Season and brown meat in a heavy pan with a tight lid. Add a bit of liquid, cover, and cook long and slow at a low heat, which tenderizes the meat and creates a tasty sauce. —**DANIEL BOULUD**, chef and author of *Braise: A Journey through International Cuisine*

“Rely on Fresh Herbs” They’re an easy way to add flavor to your cooking without butter or oil. Fresh basil, thyme, cilantro, and chives, for example, finish off a dish and elevate its natural taste. They also supply antioxidants, so they’re definitely worth the extra expense. Fresh herbs keep well in the refrigerator when washed, dried, and stored between layers of dry paper towels in



an airtight container or plastic bag. Save dried herbs for seasoning soups, stews, and stocks as they cook. —**NICOLE GARFIELD**, culinary nutritionist at the Pump, a healthy restaurant chain in New York City

“Toast Seed Spices” To bring out the rich, nutty flavor of spices that are “seeds,” such as fennel, coriander, and cumin, toast them either in your toaster oven or in a dry sauté pan until golden. —**SCOTT UEHLEIN**, corporate chef, Canyon Ranch, Tucson, AZ

“Vary Your Salads” Tired of the same old lettuce, tomato, and cucumber salad? Using a slicer, vegetable peeler, or sharp knife, thinly slice fennel,



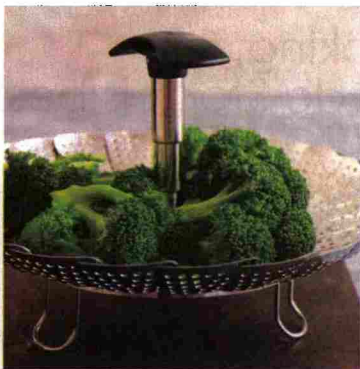
carrots, daikon, jicama, and red cabbage for a fresh winter salad. Toss it with a champagne vinegar and olive oil vinaigrette.

—**JOANNE WEIR**, cooking teacher and PBS television host

“Use What’s On Hand” Save a few hundred dollars by skipping the grocery store and doing a “clear the freezer and pantry” week (or two!). I make a list of everything I have, post it next to my computer, and brainstorm combinations and meal ideas. I might even plug ingredients into a recipe Web site for inspiration. I create menus for the week and cross items off the list as I use them. —**MELISSA D’ARABIAN**, winner of The Next Food Network Star and host of Ten Dollar Dinners with Melissa d’Arabian

YUN HEE KIM

FAST IDEAS | Cook!



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“Steam Everything” There's hardly anything I boil anymore. I use my stainless-steel steamer for potatoes and other vegetables; they retain their color and taste, hold more nutrients, and cook faster. At home, I steam corn on the cob, and, in most cases, butter isn't needed. —**FRANK TERRANOVA**, chef and associate instructor, Johnson & Wales University, College of Culinary Arts

“Simplify Entertaining” As owners of a large specialty food company, we always felt the need to impress our dinner guests. Eventually we realized that simple meals we'd made hundreds of times were best. No-fuss menus like chicken potpie, salad, and brownie sundaes featured the foods people enjoyed most. —**JONATHAN KING AND JIM STOTT**, founders of Stonewall Kitchen



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