



The Main Cooking Methods and When to Use Them

KS2 DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

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What Are Cooking Methods?

A **cooking method** is the way you heat food to make it safe to eat and delicious. Different foods need different methods — you wouldn't bake a pizza the same way you boil an egg! Choosing the right method depends on what you're cooking, how much time you have, and what texture you want.

Boiling

Boiling means cooking food in hot water. It's perfect for **pasta, potatoes, rice,** and **vegetables**. The food cooks evenly because the water surrounds it completely. It's quick and simple — just fill a pot with water, heat it until it bubbles, and add your food.

Think of it like: giving your food a warm bath in boiling water.

Frying

Frying uses hot oil or butter to cook food quickly. **Shallow frying** means using just a little oil in a flat pan — great for **pancakes, eggs,** and **fish**. **Deep frying** means cooking food completely covered in hot oil, which makes it crispy and golden, but uses more oil. Frying is fast and creates delicious flavour, though the food absorbs fat.

Baking

Baking uses dry heat in an **oven** to cook food slowly. It's the best method for **cakes, biscuits, bread,** and **roasted vegetables**. Baking takes longer than frying but gives even cooking and wonderful flavours. The oven's heat cooks food from all directions.

Think of it like: an oven is a warm box that gently cooks your food all around.

Grilling

Grilling means cooking food directly over heat, usually on metal bars. It works brilliantly for **burgers, chicken, sausages, and vegetables**. The bars leave attractive marks and create smoky flavours. Grilling is quick and doesn't need oil.

Steaming

Steaming cooks food using hot steam (water vapour) instead of boiling water. It's excellent for **vegetables, fish, and dumplings**. Steaming keeps nutrients inside the food and doesn't add fat. The food sits above boiling water in a **steamer basket**.

Think of it like: steam is invisible hot water floating as mist around your food.

Roasting

Roasting is like baking but typically for meat and hearty vegetables. It uses a hot oven and the food often sits in a little oil or gravy. **Roasting** makes meat juicy inside and crispy outside, perfect for **chicken, beef, and root vegetables**.

Choosing Your Method

Pick your cooking method by thinking about: What am I cooking? How much time do I have? What texture do I want? Fresh fish might steam beautifully, while potatoes boil quickly. Learning different methods makes you a confident, creative cook!