

Homemade Soup

A DIY GUIDE



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How to Make Homemade Soup - A DIY Guide

Follow this handy guide for making homemade soup. We'll learn how to get a soup started, we'll talk about different flavor combinations, and we'll use our creativity to make soup with what we have in our pantry.



How to get started making a homemade soup

Before I walk through different ingredients and methods, we'll first talk about the idea of a **template**. I use the idea of a template or ratio for a lot of recipe ideas. For example:

certain ingredients + cooking method = good and predictable results

For bread making, I'd use the idea that:

x amount of **flour** + x amount of **water** combined with a certain mixing **method** (water+yeast+dry ingredients+kneading, rising and baking) will **yield good results** almost every time.

For baking cookies, I'd use the ratio:

x amount of **fat** + x amount **flour** + x amount **sugar** = **cookies** every time.

From there I can modify those basic ratios. So for the bread example, I could add some herbs with the dry ingredients and get a completely new recipe. For the cookies, I could add brown sugar for chewy cookies or add in chocolate chips and get new results. But I will still get the same "idea" of a result, i.e. a loaf of bread and a dozen cookies.



We can do the same with soup!

Common ingredients + the cooking method = great soup!

So, thinking about ingredients and soup recipes we already know, we could come up these ideas:

mirepoix and tomato sauce and pasta + boiling = minestrone soup

broccoli and a creamy cheese sauce + blending = broccoli cheese soup

(p.s. Mirepoix is a mixture of diced carrots, celery and onion – a starter in most of my own soup recipes)



Using a template for making soup

Using this information, you can make up any soup that you want. And remember, soup is forgiving. This guide shows how to use the template that I follow when making soup so that we can come up with our own ideas. We'll almost always start off with heating some oil in a pot over medium heat, and then adding either onions or a mirepoix. Then we'll add any other vegetables, spice, herbs, stock and any extra like beans or pasta. Bring to a boil, then simmer.

You can do the exact same thing in so many different combinations! And you get to decide whether to make it:

- **chunky** or **blended**
- **broth based** or **creamy**
- **vegetarian** or with **meat**

So just remember:

Common ingredients + the cooking method = great soup

If we add in a few more ingredients, and some spices, we can also come up the following combinations:

Onions + ground beef + tomato and stock + chili and cumin + corn + tortillas = tortilla soup

Onions + mushrooms + stock and cream + dill and paprika = Hungarian mushroom soup

Great, right? Now that you have a basic template, read on to learn more about each different component.



Where to Start

I always start my soup with a big pot, and I make about 6-8 servings. I use my 5 qt or 7 qt enameled cast iron dutch oven by Cuisinart, both of which I love, and a simple wooden spoon. Sometimes I use a whisk if I'm using butter and flour as a thickener. I also use an immersion blender a lot. You could also use a stand blender. I don't think you need anything fancy to make soup. So let's get onto **ingredients** and **methods**.



Ingredients

Fat

2-3 tablespoons. I always start off by heating a fat (to cook my aromatics and vegetables in). I usually use oil like canola oil. You could use butter if you're making a creamier soup. You could also use coconut oil if you're making something that would benefit from the flavor like a Thai curry soup.

Aromatics

3-4 cups. That seems like a lot, but I use 3-4 cups because in this group, I also include mirepoix (carrot, celery, onion) because I usually cook those at this point, before I add any other vegetables. So choose a mixture of onions, shallots, leeks, garlic, carrots, celery, classic mirepoix, Italian soffrito or asian style shallots and ginger. I always add garlic in the last minute of this cooking phase, being careful not to burn it.

Vegetables

2-3 cups. This is all up to your preference and what you think will match your dish. Corn, peas, peppers, zucchini, greens, broccoli, potatoes, sweet potatoes. Remember that root vegetables will take longer (10-15 minutes total) to cook than vegetables like peas (3 minutes or so), so stagger the timing when you're adding these, adding the ones that need the longest cooking time first.

Meat

1-2 pounds chicken breast or thighs, sausage, beef, pork, shrimp, etc. Cook the meat now, and cook it fully, except for the shrimp. I always add shrimp in for the last minute or two of cooking time – small ones really don't take that long!

Base liquid

6-8 cups. Again, choose whatever matches your dish. Some ideas are chicken stock, beef stock, mushroom stock, vegetable stock, tomato passata, coconut milk, water, milk or cream. If using cream, add at the end and avoid boiling so it doesn't curdle. Warm the dairy a little before adding to another hot liquid.

Extras

This would be things like pasta, rice and beans. Pasta and rice will absorb a lot of the liquid while cooking, so limit to 1/2 – 3/4 cups. Add more of your base liquid at the end if the pasta or rice has absorbed too much. For beans, let cook for 10 minutes or so, to heat through and soften a bit. 1-2 cans will do depending on how much of your other ingredients you've used.



Flavor boosters

This where you can really take your soup to over the top delicious. This includes ingredients like:

- spices and herbs
- fish sauce
- soy sauce
- sesame oil
- miso paste (don't boil)
- lime juice
- tomato paste

For spices and dried herbs, add to the pot and cook for a minute before adding your base liquid.

For fresh herbs, add at the end.

For fish sauce and soy sauce, add with the base liquid.

For sesame oil, add at the end.

For miso paste, add at the end, ladling out a bit of the warm soup and whisking the miso paste with it before adding back to the pot.

For lime juice, add at the end.

For tomato paste, add with spices, just before the base liquid.

Seasoning

Salt and pepper. Season to taste throughout the cooking process and before serving.

Garnishes

Choose a garnish or two that match the rest of your dish.

Some ideas are:

- chopped peanuts
- shredded cheese
- sliced or diced avocado
- nuts or seeds
- fresh herbs
- crouton
- drizzle of oil
- yogurt or sour cream

After reading about all of the ingredients that go into soup, we could write up our template like this:

- 2-3 tablespoon fat
- 3-4 cups aromatics
- 2-3 cups vegetables
- 1-2 lbs meat
- 6-8 cups liquid
- 1/2 -3/4 cups extras
- 1-2 teaspoons flavor boosters
- salt and pepper
- garnish, as fitting

That's a basic template for a **broth based** soup. For a **creamy** soup, you would add 2-4 tablespoons each of butter and flour. For a **blended** soup, you would puree it. Read below for **how to take this template and add a cooking method** for each of these three types of soup: broth based, blended, and creamy. I will also give you a recipe example.

Print out any of the following pages to have right in front of you while cooking.



Broth Based Soup



Pictured above: Chicken Noodle Soup, a broth based soup

Broth Based Soup

Template:

Heat **fat** in a large pot, over medium heat.
Add **aromatics** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **vegetables** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **meat**, if using, and cook fully (except shrimp).
Add **garlic**, cook one minute.
Add any **spices** or **dried herbs**, cook for about a minute.
Add **base liquid**.
Bring to **boil**.
Add any **extras**. **Simmer** to cook the extras.
Add any **flavor boosters**.
Season with **salt** and **pepper**
Garnish. Serve.

An example of a blended soup is Tortilla or Chicken Noodle Soup.

With Ingredients:

Heat **oil** in a large pot, over medium heat.
Add **onions** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **carrots** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **diced chicken** and cook fully.
Add **garlic** and cook for one minute.
Add **chili powder, ground cumin** and **dried oregano**, cook for about a minute.
Add **chicken stock** and **tomato passata**.
Bring to **boil**.
Add **black beans, corn** and torn up **tortilla** bits. **Simmer** 10 minutes to cook.
Add **lime juice**.
Season with **salt** and **pepper**
Garnish with **fried tortilla strips, grated cheese** and **diced avocado**. **Serve.**



Creamy Soup



Pictured above: Chicken Pot Pie Soup, a creamy soup

Creamy Soup

Template:

Heat **oil** in a large pot, over medium heat.
Add **aromatics** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **vegetables** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **meat**, and cook fully. (Except for shrimp)
Add **spices** or **dried herbs**.
Add **butter** and melt it.
Add **flour** and **whisk** it into the **butter**, cook for about a minute.
Add **base liquid**.
Add **extras**. Bring to **boil**. **Simmer** to cook extras.
Season with **salt** and **pepper**.
Add **cream**, if using.
Garnish. Serve.

An example of a blended soup is Chicken Pot Pie Soup.

With Ingredients:

Heat **canola oil** in a large pot, over medium heat.
Add **mirepoix** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **vegetables** and cook for a few minutes.
Add **chicken** and cook fully.
Add **dried thyme**, cook for a minute.
Add 4 tablespoons **butter** and melt it.
Add 4 tablespoons **flour** & whisk it into the butter, cook for about a minute.
Add **chicken stock**.
Add cubed **potatoes**. Bring to **boil**. **Simmer** to cook extras.
Season with **salt** and **pepper**.
Add **cream**.
Garnish with fresh herbs. **Serve**.



Blended Soup



Pictured above: Curried Sweet Potato + Carrot Soup, a blended soup

Blended Soup

Template:

Heat **oil** in a large pot, over medium heat.

Add **aromatics** and cook for a few minutes.

Add **vegetables** and any extras – potatoes, cubed squash, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

Add **spices** or **dried herbs**.

Add **base liquid**.

Bring to **boil**.

Simmer to cook extras.

Blend.

Reheat over low to add **milk or cream**.

Season with **salt** and **pepper**

Garnish.

Serve.

An example of a blended soup is Sweet Potato + Carrot Soup

With Ingredients:

Heat **oil** in a large pot, over medium heat.

Add some **mirepoix** and cook for a few minutes.

Add **carrot and sweet potatoes**, cook for a few minutes.

Add **curry powder**.

Add **vegetable stock**.

Bring to **boil**.

Simmer to cook the carrots and potatoes.

Blend.

Reheat over low and add a bit of **cream**.

Add drizzle of **honey**.

Season with **salt** and **pepper**.

Garnish, if desired.

Serve.



Tips + Tricks for Homemade Soup

I hope this guide has helped you understand how to use what you have on hand to make a homemade soup. As long as you have some vegetables, liquid, and spices you can make so many variations on these basic templates.

I've formatted each of the cooking methods on their own pages, so that you can print them and have them right in front of you as you're cooking. Now I'll share a few more tips that I think will help you along the way.

Tips for making homemade soup:

1. Be ready! Have your ideas written out and all of your ingredients chopped and measured before you even turn your on stove. This will help you make sure that none of the stages of cooking get away from you, resulting in a failed dish.

For example, once you add the garlic, you want to watch it and cook it for only a minute or so while stirring, so that you don't burn it. Burnt garlic is bitter and gross! You don't want to be measuring spices and opening cartons of broth right now, you want to focus on that step only, which is cooking the garlic.

I don't want you to have to start over, so by always having the next step ready, you'll set yourself up for success.

2. Bite-sized pieces. When chopping your meats and vegetables, thinking about bite sized pieces and chop accordingly. It's no fun to take a spoonful of soup and be trying to capture a giant piece of broccoli while ending up with burning hot liquid running down your chin. Trust me. Bite-sized pieces.

3. Season while you go! Salt is very important in dishes. Season and taste throughout the process.

4. Be flexible and creative! Use my templates as guides. You may want to add more or less of any component and that's fine. It's your soup. If it looks like you need more broth, add more. If you want more extras, go for it! If you want to blend your soup only halfway, please do. Have fun cooking! And please share your results with me, either by emailing me at jsuzannepiper@gmail.com, or by visiting my contact page on my website at <http://www.pipercooks.com/contact/> or by tagging me on Instagram @pipercooks #pipercooksblog. I'd love to hear from you.



Storage Tips

Cool hot soup to room temperature and then refrigerate. This can take 1-2 hours. Refrigerate for up to 3-5 days.

Some soups, such as ones that have noodles in them, will need some extra liquid when reheating, as the pasta can continue to absorb liquid. Simply add water or stock while heating.

Cool hot soup to room temperature before freezing. Frozen soup can last a few months in the freezer. If freezing a soup with pasta in it, leave the pasta out when you make the soup the first time, and instead make the amount you need separately once you thaw the soup. I haven't had success freezing noodles or dairy.