

Using herbs in the kitchen

General tips

When using herbs, a little bit goes a long way. Use culinary herbs sparingly to enhance the natural flavors of other ingredients in your recipes.

That said, fresh herbs contain more water than dried ones, so use two to three times more fresh herbs than dried to get the same amount of essential oil.

When using fresh herbs in recipes, save the leaves, flowers, or seeds; discard the stems.

For small quantities, simply add snipped leaves. If you need larger quantities, bunch the leaves on a cutting board and mince the pile with a sharp knife. Food processors are also handy tools.

Many cooks rub fresh and dried herbs between their hands before adding them to the pot—in order to crush the herbs and release their essential oils. If your recipe calls for a fine powder, grind dried herbs with a mortar and pestle, or purchase a special spice grinder. A coffee grinder works well, but be sure to carefully wipe it clean for the best flavor.

Use ground herbs immediately for the best flavor.

Add most herbs at the end of a recipe. Their flavors are released with gentle heat, but are quickly lost if cooked longer than 30 minutes.

Salad herbs

Anise hyssop, arugula, basil, bee balm, borage, burnet, catnip, chervil, chives, cilantro, costmary, cress, dill, dock, endive, escarole, fennel, lemon balm, lovage, marjoram, mint, nasturtium, parsley, rue, saltwort, savory, shiso, sorrel, sweet pink, tarragon, thyme, viola, yarrow

Vegetable herbs

- Artichokes: Savory, tarragon
- Asparagus: Burnet, chervil, chives, dill, lemon balm, tarragon
- Avocado: Dill, marjoram, tarragon
- Brussels sprouts: Dill, sage, savory
- Cabbage: Borage, dill seed, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, sage, savory, thyme
- Carrots: Chervil, parsley
- Cauliflower: Chives, dill leaf and seed, fennel, rosemary
- Green beans: Dill, marjoram, mint, oregano, rosemary, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme
- Lentils: Mint, parsley, savory, sorrel
- Mushrooms: Basil, burnet, dill, lemon balm, marjoram, parsley, rosemary, savory, tarragon, thyme
- Onions: Basil, marjoram in soup, oregano, sage, tarragon, thyme
- Peas: Basil, chervil, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory
- Potatoes: Basil, chives, costmary, dill, hyssop, lavender, lovage, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, savory, thyme
- Spinach: Borage, chervil, marjoram, mint, rosemary for soup, sage, sorrel, tarragon
- Tomatoes: Basil, chervil, chives, dill seed, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, sage, savory, tarragon
- Turnips: Dill seed, marjoram, savory
- Zucchini: Basil, dill, marjoram, rosemary, tarragon

Bread herbs

Anise hyssop, basil, borage, chives, costmary, dill, fennel, rosemary, thyme, viola

Egg & cheese herbs

- **General:** Arugula, basil, borage, chervil, chives, cress, dill, nasturtium, parsley, rue, tarragon, yarrow
- **Deviled eggs:** All the above, marjoram, oregano
- **Hard cheeses:** Dill seed, rosemary, sage
- **Soft cheeses:** Chervil, chives, dill seed, fennel, marjoram, mint, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme

Soup herbs

- **General:** Arugula, borage, chervil; costmary, hyssop, lemon balm; lovage leaf and seed; marjoram; mint; oregano, parsley leaf, stem and root; rosemary; savory; sorrel; tarragon; thyme
- **Minestrone:** Basil, rosemary, thyme
- **Pea:** Basil, borage, dill, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, savory, thyme
- **Potato:** Parsley
- **Tomato:** Basil, dill, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme

Fish herbs

- **General:** Basil, chervil, chives, dill, fennel, hyssop, lemon balm, lemon thyme, lovage, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, rue, savory, tarragon, thyme
- **Oily fish:** Fennel, dill
- **Salmon:** Dill seed, rosemary
- **Soup:** Lovage, sage (used sparingly), savory, tarragon, thyme

Poultry & game herbs

- **Venison:** Lovage seed, marjoram, rosemary, sage, savory
- **Chicken:** Chervil, chives, fennel, lemon balm, marjoram, mint, parsley, savory, tarragon, thyme
- **Duck:** Rosemary, marjoram, sage, tarragon
- **Goose:** Fennel, marjoram, sage
- **Turkey:** Parsley, sage, marjoram, tarragon, thyme

Marinade herbs

Basil, cilantro, dill, fennel, lemon balm, lovage, mint, parsley stems, rosemary, tarragon

Meat herbs

- **Beef:** Basil, chervil, lovage seed, marjoram (pot roasts), mint, oregano, parsley, peppermint, rosemary, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme
- **Lamb:** Basil, chervil, dill, lemon balm, lovage seed, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, savory, thyme
- **Pork:** Chervil, coriander, fennel, lovage seed, marjoram, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme
- **Liver:** Basil, dill, marjoram, sage, tarragon
- **Ham:** Lovage, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, savory

Dessert herbs

- **General:** Aniseed, bee balm, lemon balm, lemon verbena, pineapple sage, rosemary,
- **Custards:** Mint, scented geraniums
- **Fruit salads:** Lemon balm, mint, rosemary
- **Fruit compotes:** Dill, mint with pears, coriander, dill with apples, savory with quinces

Vinegar herbs

Basil, bee balm, chervil, dill, fennel, garlic, lavender, lemon balm, marjoram, mint, nasturtium, rosemary, savory, southernwood/old man, sweet pink, tarragon, thyme

Jelly herbs

- **Savory:** Basil, mint, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme
- **Sweet:** Bee balm, marigold, lemon balm, lemon verbena, scented geranium

Wine herbs

Bee balm, borage, lemon balm, lemon verbena, mint, rosemary