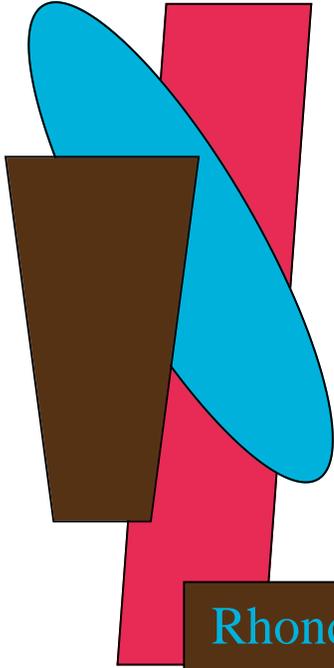


Kitchen Basics



How To Stock Your
Kitchen With The
Tools You Really
Need To Cook

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Introduction

Home cooking is becoming a lost art to many due to the microwave generation of cooks. The microwave generation are the people who take the processed food out of the freezer and pop it in the microwave. The average person does not own the cooking essentials to prepare a home cooked meal outside of the microwave. I've recently started hosting cooking classes for some of the ladies at my church as they have asked me to help them learn how to prepare home cooked meals. I also have another group of people who pay me to prepare meals for them. This is the first book in a series for kitchen basics for cooking.

To set up a kitchen that is ready to prepare home cooked meals you will need some basic cookware items. The following are the must have items for setting up your kitchen:

Pots and Fry Pans

When selecting pots you want to inspect the cookware thoroughly to ensure it's thick enough to distribute heat evenly and to alleviate sticking. I highly recommend IKEA's 365 series of cookware. I've found these to be great for the beginning and seasoned cooks. They are stainless steel, easy to clean and cook evenly. I especially love the Teflon coated fry pans.



Baking Pans

Once you've chosen a basic set of cookware you will want to pick out some baking pans. I suggest a set of anchor hocking glass bakeware. They are great for cooking casseroles, macaroni & cheese, baking meats and brownies. You also want to grab a cake pan and a couple of cookie sheets which are great for baking rolls, breads and biscuits. If you find yourself in a pinch for needing a baking pan run over to your nearest Dollar Store for a disposable pan.



Cutting Boards

Wood vs. Plastic

Plastic for everyday use is my preference as it can go in the dishwasher for cleaning and sanitizing. Wooden boards take more work for proper cleaning to keep bacteria out of porous surface. Cutting boards are an essential piece to the kitchen as they give you a proper surface to cut on so that you do not damage your counter tops and/or table.



Knives

You should have a nice set of knives. Your knives should be of good quality. I recommend a basic set that cost a minimum of \$50 to get started. Having the proper knives make preparing food a lot easier.



Utensils

Having the right utensils when preparing and serving food is essential for life in the kitchen. I recommend the following as a starter set in your kitchen:

- a. Spoon
- b. Slotted Spoon
- c. Spatula
- d. Whisk
- e. Wooden Spoons
- f. Ladle
- g. Peeler



Mixing Bowls & Mixer

As the beginning kitchen enthusiast you should purchase a basic hand held mixer and a set of mixing bowls that contains 3-4 bowls of varying sizes. A hand held mixer makes stirring things a lot easier than stirring with a large spoon. You can purchase plastic or stainless steel depending on personal preference. Mixing bowls are useful for many things other than mixing a baked good. I use them when making many dishes from coating chicken to fry to mixing a salad. Mixing bowls can also be used as serving bowls for large portions when having guests.



Measuring Cups & Spoons

The unexperienced cook should use accurate measurements to ensure a product that tastes and looks great. As you become a more experienced cook you will know the amounts needed without using a measuring cup or spoon. Plastic cups and spoons are fine but you will want to have at least one glass measuring cup. Glass measuring cups are great for melting butter in the microwave when you need to measure it.



Colander

This is an excellent tool for draining and rinsing pasta after cooking. Colanders are also the perfect tool for washing vegetables and fruits.



Pot Holders/Oven Mitts

Pot holders are essential for the proper handling of pots and pans that are hot. They are specifically designed to aid in the prevention of burning your hands when removing items from the stove top and/or oven.



Dish Towels

The most important thing is keeping your kitchen clean. Having dish towels aids in the cleaning process in your kitchen. You will need smaller towels to wash dishes and wipe counters down and larger towels to dry your dishes after cleaning.



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