

Seasonal soup chooser

Soup and broths are cost-effective and warming food which can be batch-cooked, frozen and shared with your friends and community.

It can be daunting to know how to use ingredients you're not fond of or that are past their best. This resource will share plenty of ideas, including tips on seasonings and garnishes, so you can cook a variety of soups for your community, school or event.



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Chooser Chart



Vegetables

Bulbs – red onion, brown onion, leeks, spring onions, shallots, fennel, garlic

Roots – carrots, parsnips, celeriac, turnips, swede, beetroot

Fruits – tomatoes, peppers, aubergine, courgettes, butternut squash, pumpkin, okra, chilli, sweetcorn

Flowers – broccoli, cauliflower, globe artichoke

Leaves – spinach, lettuce, cabbage, chard, nettle

Stems – celery, asparagus, kohlrabi

Fungi – button and flat mushrooms, shitaki mushrooms, oyster mushrooms

Tubers – potato, yam, Jerusalem artichoke, sweet potato

Seeds – French beans, broad beans, peas, runner beans

Fats (for sweating vegetables) Olive oil

Sunflower oil

Rapeseed oil

Butter

Starchy thickeners

Pulses – lentils, cannellini beans, butter beans, chickpeas

Pasta

Rice

Potatoes

Flour for roux or cornflour for blended thickening

Okra

Noodles

Pearl barley

Seasonings

Vinegar – balsamic, red wine, cider vinegar

Tomato purée, sun-dried tomatoes

Spices – ground pepper, nutmeg, coriander, ginger, mace, cumin, cinnamon, turmeric, paprika, cayenne, root ginger, lemongrass, garlic

Herbs – basil, mint, thyme, chervil, chives, coriander, rosemary, bay leaf, tarragon, sage, oregano

Miso paste, harissa paste

Citrus – lemon juice, orange zest, lime juice

Beef or yeast extract Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, tabasco

Liquids

Vegetable stock, Chicken stock, Milk, Coconut milk, Water

Tomato juice or passata

Garnishes

Single cream, double cream, crème fraîche

Yoghurt

Croutons

Finely chopped vegetables (brunoise)

Grated cheese

Chopped herbs

Crispy onions

Flavoured oil – chilli, nut, herb etc.

Bacon





Basic Soup Methods

Use our Chooser Chart to help develop tasty, seasonal soups

Soups are super flexible! You can use frozen and tinned veggies or wonky veg and gluts from the allotment or school garden. They also freeze well so can be batch-cooked and reheated in the microwave to save money.

For a smooth, puréed soup, choose vegetables that blend well and think about the colour the soup will be when liquidized – best to keep to either a green or orange theme to avoid everything looking brown!

Milk, coconut milk, cream or dairy alternative added at the end will give a creamier texture and flavour.

For a broth-type soup like minestrone, more advanced chopping skills are required to ensure that the vegetables cook evenly and look attractive when served. A mixture of colours looks attractive in this type of soup.

Use seasonings to complement the vegetable ingredients and think about classic combinations that work well together. Some of our favourites are carrot and coriander, tomato and basil, curried parsnip and leek and potato!

Don't forget to check allergens when creating recipes. Look out for celery, stock cubes, dairy and flour.

How to make it

Puree soup

- 1 Roughly chop vegetables
- 2 Sweat vegetables in small amount of oil or melted butter until they begin to soften; onion will look translucent when ready. To change things up, you could also roast vegetables in the oven.



- 3 Add liquid to cover vegetables
- 4 Add seasoning
- 5 Simmer until vegetables are tender
- 6 Remove from heat, cool slightly



- 7 Blend soup until smooth using a hand (stick) blender in the pan or in a food processor or liquidizer
- 8 Adjust consistency – thin down with added stock or milk
- 9 Taste and adjust seasoning
- 10 Garnish and serve

Broth

- 1 Dice vegetables finely and evenly
- 2 Sweat vegetables in small amount of oil or melted butter until they begin to soften; onion will look translucent when ready
- 3 Add liquid to cover vegetables



- 4 Add pasta, rice, pulses etc.
- 5 Add seasoning
- 6 Simmer until everything is tender
- 7 Adjust consistency – thicken with a blended cornflour mix or thin down with extra stock or other liquid
- 8 Taste and adjust seasoning

Frozen or tinned vegetables can be used to save money



- 9 Garnish and serve