

# Kitchen Hacks: How Clever Cooks Get Things Done

The kitchen is a hub of activity, where meals are prepared, memories are made, and creativity flows. However, cooking can sometimes be a demanding task, requiring patience, precision, and a touch of ingenuity. That's where kitchen hacks come in.



## Kitchen Hacks: How Clever Cooks Get Things Done

by America's Test Kitchen

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Kitchen hacks are clever tricks and shortcuts that make cooking easier, faster, and more efficient. They're the secret weapons of experienced cooks, passed down through generations, that allow them to get things done with flair and finesse.

## 10 Must-Know Kitchen Hacks

1. **Use a fork to separate egg yolks:** Crack an egg into a bowl and gently pierce the yolk with a fork. Carefully lift the fork to separate the yolk from the white.

2. **Sharpen knives with a coffee mug:** Place the dull knife upside down on a coffee mug and use a few gentle strokes to restore its sharpness.
3. **Cool herbs in water:** Rinse fresh herbs and place them in a bowl of cold water. The herbs will stay fresh and crisp for longer.
4. **Measure sticky ingredients with plastic wrap:** To measure sticky ingredients like honey or peanut butter, coat the measuring spoon with plastic wrap. The ingredients will slide off easily.
5. **Defrost meat quickly with salt:** Sprinkle salt on frozen meat to speed up the thawing process. The salt draws out moisture, which helps the meat defrost faster.
6. **Make a funnel from paper:** If you don't have a funnel, roll a piece of paper into a cone shape and use it to transfer dry ingredients or liquids into containers.
7. **Peel garlic easily with a microwave:** Place unpeeled garlic cloves in the microwave for 15 seconds. The skin will become loose and easy to remove.
8. **Cut a cake into equal slices with string:** Wrap a piece of dental floss or cooking string around the cake and pull it taut to create perfect, evenly sized slices.
9. **Prevent cutting board from sliding:** Dampen a paper towel and place it under the cutting board to keep it in place while chopping.
10. **Use a citrus zester for ginger:** Use a citrus zester to grate fresh ginger for a quick and easy way to add flavor to dishes.

## **Creative Time-Saving Kitchen Hacks**

- **Prep vegetables in advance:** Wash, peel, and chop vegetables on the weekend to save time during the week.
- **Cook in bulk:** Cook large batches of staple ingredients like rice, beans, or oatmeal and store them in the refrigerator or freezer for quick meals later.
- **Use a slow cooker:** Throw ingredients into a slow cooker in the morning and come home to a ready-made meal.
- **Batch bake:** Bake multiple dishes at once to save time and energy.
- **Make use of kitchen appliances:** Use a food processor to quickly chop vegetables, a stand mixer to knead dough, and a blender to make smoothies or sauces.

## Money-Saving Kitchen Hacks

- **Use leftovers creatively:** Repurpose leftovers into new dishes, such as turning roast chicken into a soup or stir-fry.
- **Buy in season:** Fruits and vegetables that are in season are typically more affordable.
- **Grow your own herbs:** Growing herbs in a window box or garden is a cost-effective way to add flavor to dishes.
- **Use frozen or canned produce:** Frozen and canned produce is often more affordable than fresh produce, and it can be just as nutritious.
- **Substitute expensive ingredients:** Look for affordable alternatives to expensive ingredients, such as using ground turkey instead of ground beef.

Kitchen hacks are a treasure trove of knowledge passed down through generations of clever cooks. They make cooking easier, faster, more efficient, and more enjoyable. By embracing these ingenious tricks, you can elevate your culinary skills, save time and money, and make your kitchen a more productive and creative space. So next time you're in the kitchen, don't be afraid to experiment with these hacks and discover the joy of cooking with confidence and efficiency.



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