



Recipe writing tips

Writing a recipe is an important skill. Here are some helpful tips from the McCormick Test Kitchen.

Recipe template

There are seven key elements of a recipe. Be sure to include all these within your written recipe.

Recipe title

Name of dish
e.g. Rich bolognese sauce

Preparation time

The preparation time excluding cooking, e.g. preparing vegetables, marinating meat etc.

Cooking time

Total time for the cooking process
—if no cooking is needed then the cooking time will be 0 minutes

Number of serves/Makes

The number of people the recipe will serve or the number of items the recipe will make e.g. 4 rice paper rolls (2 serves)

Ingredients

Ingredients to be used, listed in order that they are used in the recipe (see Tips for listing ingredients in a recipe)

Method

Steps to be carried out, listed in order (see Cooking method explanations)

Presentation

How the dish should be presented

Tips for listing ingredients in a recipe

When listing ingredients, list them in order of their use and always list the quantity.

- Common measurements include: tablespoon, teaspoon, mL (millilitres), g (grams), kg (kilograms).
- For volumes of 1 litre and above, use litres e.g. 1.25 L.
- Packaged and canned goods should be stated as available in store (e.g. 1 x 400 mL can, 1 x 800 g jar, etc).
- Vegetables should be described according to common descriptions e.g. 4 small carrots, 4 medium stalks celery, 1 bunch parsley. If the vegetable is sold packaged, list the package weight e.g. ½ x 150 g packet snow pea shoots.
- All preparation descriptors should be listed after the ingredient itself e.g.
 - 4 carrots, washed and diced
 - 1 x 250 g can apricot halves, drained
 - 1 chicken breast fillet, sliced.
- If butter or another spread is an ingredient, show the amount in grams (g), tablespoons or teaspoons.
- If oil is an ingredient, show the amount in tablespoons, teaspoons or cups.

Cooking method explanations

Bake or oven bake

To cook in an oven

BBQ or barbeque

To cook on a pre-heated BBQ plate

Boil

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles constantly break the surface

Grill

To cook under a heat element/griller/gas flame

Pan fry

To cook in a frying pan with a small amount of oil

Rapid boil

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles rapidly break the surface

Saute

To cook small amounts of food in oil, over medium to high heat

Simmer

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles occasionally break the surface

Steam

To cook foods in the vapour/steam of boiling water

Stir frying

To cook foods quickly over a high heat in a very hot wok or large, deep frying pan in small amount of oil