

# Helpful Kitchen Tips

From My Kitchen to Yours....

## Garlic, Onions, Herbs & Spices:

- If you don't have the herb keeper or have more **herbs** to store, keep them in a plastic baggie with a piece of paper towel. They'll last longer.
- When using **dried herbs**, rubbing them between your hands before adding them to the recipe will help bring out more of the oils/fragrance, making them more flavorful.
- Treat **parsley** just like fresh cut flowers. Trim off ½ inch of stems and store as a bouquet in a tall glass filled halfway with water and a pinch of sugar. Cover loosely with a plastic bag and change the water every two days.
- Tips on preventing tears while chopping/slicing onions (use any or all):
  - Place a lit candle near your work area
  - Chew a piece of gum
  - Place the onion in the freezer for ten minutes prior to cutting it
  - Place the onion inside the Food Chopper with the cover, and chop. This keeps the onion smell in the chopper and lid instead of wafting through the air to sting their eyes.
- Chopped **onions**, whether raw or cooked, can be frozen in an airtight container for up to 3 months...the cooked onion can be tossed into dishes without thawing.
- Quickly cut a medium sized **onion** into wedges for a stir fry using the **apple wedger**.
- "Wash" your hands with a stainless steel item (like a spoon) to remove **onion** and **garlic** odors.
- **Garlic Tips:**
  - If you aren't using fresh **garlic**, you're cutting the flavor of your food by 50%. There is no substitute for fresh garlic in regards to flavor or health benefits.
  - One clove of **garlic** is TEN TIMES STRONGER when pushed through a press than a clove minced fine with a sharp knife.
  - Remember that one clove of **garlic** is one piece; a bulb is made of lots of cloves....if you use a whole bulb when a recipe calls for a clove; you're either going out to dinner or keeping the vampires away!
  - When using **garlic**, be sure to keep the cloves attached to the root, rather than breaking off for storage. The longer they stay on the root, the longer your garlic will last. And the more fresh it will be.
  - When buying your **garlic**, you want to shop for it like men shop for their underwear: Tight and White. 🍷
  - **Garlic** eaten during pregnancy reduces the risk of pre-eclampsia. Studies show that it may also boost birth weight of babies destined to be too small.
  - **Garlic** used in the garden has been known to ward off many different types of animals and insects. **Garlic** is a great defense against Tick bites and mosquito bites.
  - **Garlic Breath??** Try chewing on a sprig of fresh parsley with lemon squeezed on it. Or eat a strawberry to cleanse your breath.
  - Did you know, **garlic** juice and its constituents can slow, or kill more than 60 different fungi and twenty types of bacteria? WOW!
  - **Garlic** should be kept in a cool, dry, dark place like your cabinet.

## THIS INFO WAS PROVIDED BY:

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## Tool Tips:

- To sharpen the blades on the **food chopper** take a sheet of tin foil and chop on it. Or take the chopper to a hardware or sewing shop & see if they can sharpen it.
- NEVER use **knives** on a glass or marble cutting board. You'll dull your knives.
- To make stew/soup, soften a bouillon cube in the microwave for a few seconds, then use the **garlic press** to press a bouillon cube through. It helps dissolve better.
- You can use the **V-shaped cutter, crinkle cutter**, and the **Corer** for carving jack-o-lanterns! If you shake some **cinnamon sprinkle** inside before lighting your candle, it will smell great too!
- If you love bacon, but hate the splattered mess, try baking it on your **bar stone**! You can cook almost a pound of bacon! 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes will give you the best bacon! Just let it cook!
- When needing to chop crispy bacon, put it in a large zippy bag and use the **baker's roller** to break it into small pieces. Put the bag in a folded dishtowel before rolling so sharp pieces don't puncture the bag. Saved lots of time & mess in chopping and didn't need to clean a knife and cutting board when done.
- Use the **Pizza Cutter** to quickly cut cooked spaghetti noodles! Much easier to cut, and perfect for bite sized kid pieces! A **pizza cutter** can also be used to cut the crusts off of bread for picky children or to cut up pancakes or waffles for the kidlets.
- Crafters in a pinch? Try using our **Pizza Cutters** to cut fabric with ease!
- Use our **Easy Accent Decorator** for more than just frostings! Fill your deviled eggs, manicotti shells or jelly doughnuts with ease!
- Use your **garlic press** for bits of sugar cookie dough during the holidays. Makes wonderful angel hair and santa beards for cookies!
- The knife from the **Cheese Bistro set** is fantastic for cutting up candied fruit. That stuff is sticky, but the design of the knife is such that there's not much for it to stick to.
- Grate hard brown sugar with the **Microplane adjustable grater**.
- Make pancake batter in the **classic batter bowl** the night before, put the lid on and place it in the fridge overnight, the pancakes will be a lot lighter and fluffier.
- Peach skins come off smoothly when peeled with the **Vegetable Peeler**.

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## Fruits:

- **Citrus Fruit tips:**
  - Before zesting or cutting citrus fruit, roll on the counter for a few seconds to soften it up.
  - Boil the remnants of your **limes**, **lemons** and **oranges** after juicing them. It will make your house smell wonderful! And/or grind the peels from **oranges**, **lemon**, **limes**, etc down your disposal to keep your sink fresh!
  - If you are not using fresh **citrus fruits** you are cutting your flavor by at least 50% - if your lemon juice comes in a little lemon shaped bottle, than you are not getting the true flavor or lemon juice!
  - Ripe **lemons** have a smooth surface, and the top "nub" is elongated. The bigger the nub, the riper the lemon. Room temp. **lemons** will yield more juice.
  - Rubbing a cut **lime** on your forehead will get rid of a headache!
- **Ripen fruit** quickly by placing it in a paper bag with a ripe apple. Fold down the top of the bag and let it sit for a day or two. The apple emits ethylene gas, which is a natural ripening agent.
- When you get home from the market, rinse **strawberries** in a bowl containing 2 quarts water and 1/2 cup white vinegar. Remove the berries, rinse under running water, then spin dry in a salad spinner. When dry, store in an airtight container. This will help your strawberries keep for a week or more!
- When buying a **pineapple**, give a tug to one of the leaves, if it comes out easily, it's ripe. For a sweeter tasting pineapple, turn it upside down for a day or two before cutting it. Did you know that once a **pineapple** is picked, it will ripen no further? It takes 18-24 months to grown an entire pineapple and they don't grow on trees!
- **Kiwi** is a natural meat tenderizer. If you have a cheap cut of meat, rub a cut kiwi on it.
- To easily peel a **kiwi**, cut it in half and then slide a spoon between the skin and fruit. Spoon around the entire fruit for a perfect kiwi!
- **Peaches** will not ripen further once removed from the tree (they only "soften"). Fill a box with peaches and cover them with newspaper to speed up the softening process. To store in the freezer, slice the washed peaches into chunks, sprinkle on some lemon juice and pack them in freezer bags. To peel peaches, place whole peach in boiling water for 30 seconds. Remove from boiling water with slotted spoon and place in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. Pull skin off using blade edge of paring knife to grab peel. Also use this method to peel other fruits such as apricots and tomatoes.
- When buying **apples**, turn them over and look at the bottom. There is a little "bud" in the middle - that bud should be nice and tight - if it is open or missing it is not as fresh. The tighter the bud is, the longer the apple will keep.
- To keep peeled **apples** and **bananas** from turning brown, soak them in Sprite, 7-Up, lemon juice or pineapple juice! Add a hint of lemon juice to your fruit salad to keep it from turning brown.
- **Bananas**
  - If you peel a banana from the bottom instead of the top, it takes more of the little stringy things with the peel.
  - If you keep bananas in the fridge they last longer(dont look like it.. but taste like it) or place your bananas in a ziploc baggy, they will continue to ripen, but won't turn black!
  - To keep your bananas fresh longer break them all apart - don't leave them clumped together. Breaking them apart it slows down the ripening process.
  - If your bananas get too ripe on you, don't throw them away. Peel the banana and store whole in plastic freezer bags, or squish it up in the bag - remove all of the air and put it in the freezer. Add to it when you have more. When you need bananas for a recipe, take out your bag and scoop out what you need.

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Great for breads, smoothies, pancakes, etc. and they are already mushed up so you don't have to wait for them to soften up to use them.

## Vegetables:

- Don't store **apples and carrots** in the same drawer apples give off an ethylene gas that makes carrots bitter.
- To keep **green onions** and **celery** fresh in the fridge without getting soggy, take them out of plastic bags they come in when you buy them at the store. To keep celery longer in the fridge, wrap it in aluminum foil. When **celery** loses its crispness, throw it in some ice cold water.
- Steam your **broccoli** for one minute, then dip into cold water to keep a beautiful vibrant green color.
- Try grating **carrots** with the Deluxe Cheese Grater. No slippery carrots to keep a hold of, and better yet, no grated knuckles!
- To keep **salad greens** and cut **veggies** fresh ~ put a paper towel with them in a plastic bag. It will absorb the moisture so your produce will last longer!
- Store ripe **tomatoes** stem side down at room temperature away from direct sunlight and use within a few days. Never refrigerate tomatoes as it will make the flesh pulpy and destroy the flavor.
- Just in case you didn't count the last time you had **corn** on the cob: Each ear has an average of 800 kernels.
- **Pepper Tips:**
  - Pick **bell peppers** up and look at the bottoms. Count the bumps. 4 bumps means it is a sweet pepper - better for summer type recipes - salads, dipping, shish-ka-bobs. Odd number of bumps (3, 5, etc) means it will not be sweet - it will have a bolder flavor that can stand up better in soups and stews - winter type recipes.
  - If you aren't going to use the entire **pepper** in a recipe don't cut the stem and seeds out - leave them attached & the pepper will "seal" itself off & stay fresh much longer. Wrap with a dry paper towel then put in a ziploc bag. It will last 2 or 3 times longer.
  - **Red peppers** are simply more ripened green peppers and contain twice the amount of vitamin C.
  - A ripe **jalapeno pepper** will have brown, woody looking lines on it.
- **Lettuce Tips:**
  - **Lettuce** leaves should be torn by hand; cutting with a knife will turn the edges brown faster. If you must cut lettuce, be sure to use a stainless steel knife dipped in vinegar or use the salad chopper.
  - **Lettuce** tends to keep well in plastic bags in the crisper section of the refrigerator. Salad greens should not be stored near fruits that produce ethylene gases (like apples) as this will increase brown spots on the lettuce leaves and increase spoilage.
  - Drop a **lettuce** leaf into your cooked soup for the last few minutes and it will absorb a great deal of fat/grease.
- **Potato Tips:**
  - Do not refrigerate **potatoes**. The temp will turn the potato starch into sugar. Always store your potatoes in a dark, cool, dry area with good air flow. The bag that they come in even suggests that you don't store them in the fridge.
  - If you add an apple to your bag of **potatoes** once you get home from the grocery store, it will keep your potatoes from sprouting.
  - To improve the taste of old **potatoes**, add to the water which they are boiled.
  - If you over salt a dish on the stove top while boiling.... drop a peeled **potato** in it. The potato will absorb all the salt for you!

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- To keep **potatoes** from browning, place them into a bowl with 4 cups of water and 4 Tbsp. Lemon juice.
- When making mashed **potatoes**, instead of cutting them into chunks, try slicing them when the Ultimate Slice and Grate. They will cook MUCH faster!

## Other food tips:

- If you are not using fresh **hard cheeses** like Parmesan and Romano, you are not getting at least 50% of the flavor of fresh hard cheeses.
- Take your **cheese** from the plastic it came in and wrap it in aluminum foil, cheese cloth or parchment paper instead. It will take the shelf life in your refrigerator to 5 or 6 months or more!
- Heat up leftover **pizza** in a nonstick skillet on top of the stove, set heat to med-low and heat till warm. This keeps the crust crispy. No soggy micro pizza.
- To crack an **egg**, instead of cracking in on the edge of a bowl, crack on a flat surface - it cracks cleaner. When cracking eggs, if you get a small piece of shell in them, use the EGG SHELL to fish it out. It will attract the small piece and it's easy to get! (If you do this, wash your eggs prior to washing- most salmonella is actually on the outside of the egg. This is also important when separating an egg. If you do not have the egg separator, and you use the egg to separate the yolk, wash the egg prior to doing so).
- Turn a carton of **eggs** sideways in the refrigerator the night before you make deviled eggs and the yolks will be in the middle!
- Not sure if your **egg** is still fresh, put it into a bowl of water. If it floats, throw it out.
- When you are boiling pasta, potatoes, anything in your pots - put a **bamboo wooden spoon** across the top - it will prevent the liquid from boiling over.
- If you have both raw and hard-boiled **eggs** in the fridge and can't tell which is which, spin them on the fat end. Raw eggs will not spin. To keep from having to do that, put a dash of balsamic vinegar into the water when you boil eggs. The dark color of the vinegar will turn the shells beige, so you can identify those as the cooked eggs.
- When beating **eggs**, it is always best to allow them to come to room temperature first; 30-45 minutes will do it. If you add a little water instead of milk, you will get more volume and a fluffier cooked product.
- Eating a spoonful of **peanut butter** cures the hiccups.
- To keep **ice cream** fresh & avoid ice crystals from forming. Place a sheet of plastic wrap directly on top of ice cream and then replace lid
- When baking a chocolate **cake**, dust cake pan with cocoa powder instead of flour. It will cause the same non stick effect without the white residue.
- When you buy a container of **cake** frosting from the store, whip it with your mixer for a few minutes. You can double it in size. You get to frost more cake/cupcakes with the same amount. You also eat less sugar and calories per serving.
- Draw your design with a toothpick before decorating a **cake**. Then you can just follow the stenciling as a guide with our decorator bottle set.
- When making a **cake**, eggs and milk brought to room temperature will yield a higher cake. However, a **pie crust** will be more easily made if all the ingredients are cool.
- If your **brown sugar** has turned hard as a rock, break a piece off and run it through the deluxe cheese grater. You can grate it right into your measuring cups! Or freeze it for a couple days, it will soften. If you place a piece of bread in your **brown sugar** bag, it will keep it from getting hard.
- If you want the **frosting** on your chocolate cake to really shine, use your blow dryer on it for a few seconds.
- When making **hamburgers**, add a little flour to it to make them hold together better. Grate an apple into hamburger to add moistness.
- **Bacon** dipped in flour will not shrink. Soaking bacon in ice water also works.
- For golden brown **fried chicken**, roll it in powdered milk instead of flour.

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- Place **bay leaves** in kitchen drawers and flour/sugar containers to keep crawling insects away!
- Keep your **Saran Wrap** in the freezer. It is easier to unroll, doesn't stick to itself until it warms up and it is easier to tear!
- Don't throw out that leftover **wine**. Freeze it into an ice cube try to use in casseroles or sauces at a later date.
- Make **ice cubes** festive for a party by freezing sprigs of mint, maraschino cherries, lemon or orange peel in them.
- Want a quick clean up tip? Try **baking** on Parchment paper instead of a bare pan. Makes clean up a breeze and doesn't alter the cooking time or flavor!
- When making **soup**, to absorb the grease that settles to the top, place a leaf of lettuce on top of the soup while cooking. Remove when it has done its job!
- Sprinkle a bit of salt on **frying** pan before cooking to keep grease from splattering.
- When making **apple pies**, sprinkle 1 Tbsp. Lemon gelatin over apples before you put the top crust on. It not only adds flavor, but also prevents spillovers!
- A **marshmallow** stuffed into an ice cream cone will prevent dripping!
- Instead of ditching the **grease** and fat from browned meats, use a slice of stale bread to soak it up while still in the pan. Let the bread dry a bit and then crumble it to feed to outdoor birds. A good way to safely rid yourself of grease and the birds love it!
- To make your **cookies** soften up, put a slice of bread in the container with them.
- Rinse your cooked **pasta** before using it in a cold pasta salad to remove the extra salt but leave your pasta un-rinsed when making a hot pasta dish because the sauce will cling to the starch.
- **Baking Soda** will live long enough to see your 4 yr old married but **Baking powder** has a shelf life of only 1 yr. To find out if your baking powder is good, put a tsp in a small glass of water - If it bubbles, bake away. If not, head to the store.
- To **clean your microwave**, put a little vinegar water in a prep bowl and microwave for 1 minute, let stand for 10 minutes, and wipe all that gross stuff away easily.
- Use **sea/kosher salt** on meat - won't cause the meat to dry out like iodized salt does.
- Slicing **meat** when partially frozen makes it easier to get thin slices.
- Roasting your **meats** fat side up will allow for continuous basting. As the meat roasts the fat will run down the meat as it renders, adding moisture and flavor.
- If you add sour cream to your choc. chip **cookie** recipes the cookies will be much softer. It doesn't affect the taste.
- Instead of putting rice into your **salt shaker** to combat humidity, use a toothpick. It will serve the same purpose.
- If you are **frying food** and need to see if the oil is hot enough stand a wooden spoon up in the pot. If bubbles come out from the spoon then it is ready to go.
- For those who may have **un-welcome friends in their kitchen** - To get rid of pesky **fruit flies**, take a small glass fill it 1/2" with Apple Cider Vinegar and 2 drops of dish washing liquid, mix well. You will find those flies drawn to the cup and gone forever! For **ants**, put small piles of cornmeal where you see ants. They eat it, take it "home," can't digest it so it kills them. It may take a week or so, especially if it rains, but it works & you don't have the worry about pets or small children being harmed!

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