



Air Fryer — 60 Simple Recipes for Every Day

Contents

1. Air Fryer Demystified – How to Get Started	5
How an Air Fryer Works	5
Temperatures and Times – A Cheat Sheet to Start With	6
Safety: Internal Temperature	8
Accessories and Prepping Food	9
The Most Common Beginner Mistakes	10
2. Breakfasts and Light Meals	12
Mornings Without Waiting for the Oven	12
1. Eggs in Silicone Molds	13
2. Baked Oatmeal with Apple and Cinnamon	13
3. French Toast with Cinnamon	14
4. Crispy Bacon	14
5. Egg Muffins with Bell Pepper and Spinach	15
6. Homemade Granola with Nuts	15
7. Grilled Cheese and Ham Sandwich	16
8. Banana Pancakes	17
9. Baked Apples with Honey and Nuts	17
10. Cinnamon Rolls from Ready-Made Dough	18
3. Poultry and Meat for Dinner	20

Meat Without Watching the Pan	20
11. Whole Roast Chicken	20
12. Chicken Thighs in Honey and Mustard	21
13. Crispy Breaded Chicken Breast	21
14. BBQ Wings	22
15. Ground Turkey Patties	23
16. Pork Neck Steaks	23
17. BBQ Pork Ribs	24
18. Pork Tenderloin with Herbs	24
19. Breaded Pork Cutlet	25
20. Beef Burgers	25
21. Meatballs in Tomato Sauce	26
22. Curry Chicken	26
23. Beef Steak	27
4. Fish, Vegetables, and Vegetarian Dishes	29
Light Meals for Every Day	29
24. Salmon Baked with Lemon and Dill	29
25. Garlic Shrimp	30
26. Breaded Cod	30
27. Whole Baked Trout	31
28. Tuna Steak	31
29. Whole Roasted Cauliflower	32
30. Sweet Potato Fries	32
31. Brussels Sprouts with Parmesan	33
32. Bell Peppers Stuffed with Grains	33
33. Zucchini in Parmesan Breading	34
34. Baked Falafel	34

CONTENTS

35.	Sesame Tofu	35
36.	Mushrooms Stuffed with Cheese	36
5.	Snacks, Fries, and Sides	38
	Movie Night Without Ordering In	38
37.	Classic Potato Fries	38
38.	Potato Fritters	39
39.	Breaded Onion Rings	40
40.	Cheese Sticks	40
41.	Homemade Chicken Nuggets	41
42.	Kale Chips	41
43.	Pierogi from the Freezer	42
44.	Cheese Quesadilla	42
45.	Baked Nachos	43
46.	Cheese Croissants	43
47.	Corn on the Cob	44
48.	Soft Pretzels	44
6.	Desserts and a Sweet End to the Day	46
	Sweet Things Without Heating the Whole Oven	46
49.	Chocolate Brownie in a Mold	46
50.	Mini Apple Pie	47
51.	Bananas in Puff Pastry	47
52.	Oat Cookies	48
53.	Baked Peaches with Cinnamon	48
54.	Chocolate Muffins	49
55.	Apple Crumble	49
56.	Croissants with Chocolate Spread	50
57.	Baked Pears in Maple Syrup	50

CONTENTS

58. Chocolate Chip Cookies 51

59. Mini Cheesecake 51

60. Doughnuts from Ready-Made Dough 52

Summary 53

01

Air Fryer Demystified – How to Get Started

How an Air Fryer Works

An air fryer does not fry in the classic sense of the word. Hot air circulates inside the basket, washing over the food from every side at once, so the surface turns crisp without ever bathing in fat. The appliance works rather like a small, very intense fan oven, only faster and cheaper to run, because it heats a compact chamber instead of the whole cavity of a full-size oven.

This forced circulation means cooking takes less time than in a conventional oven, and the heat reaches the food almost evenly from every direction. In practice it also means you can cook at any time of year without heating up the whole kitchen, which makes a real difference in summer.

20–25%

faster than a conventional oven

Forced Convection

The mechanism behind an air fryer. A fan mounted above the basket drives hot air downwards; the air flows around the food and returns to

the top, where it is reheated. The smaller the chamber, the faster this loop closes, which is why a small basket cooks faster than a large oven.

Not every dish feels equally at home in an air fryer. Loose batters with no tin to hold them, dishes swimming in thick sauce, or a several-kilo roast are better left to the oven or a pot, because the small basket and fierce airflow give them neither the room nor the time they need. Anything that would end up spread across a baking sheet in a single layer anyway, on the other hand, comes out just as well in an air fryer, or better.

For a beginner all of this comes down to one practical point: recipes written for an oven have to be converted, or the dish will burn on the outside before it is done in the middle.

Temperatures and Times – A Cheat Sheet to Start With

The simplest way to convert is to drop the temperature by around 20°C from the oven recipe and shorten the time according to the table below. This is a general rule, tested against most home recipes, so treat it as a starting point rather than a hard law of physics.

For the most common categories of food you can also work straight from ready-made ranges, without converting anything from an oven recipe. Every number in this table comes back in the chapters that follow, alongside specific recipes, so there is no need to commit them to memory now.

Table 1.1: Time conversion: oven to air fryer

Time in the oven	Time in the air fryer
10 min	8 min
20 min	16 min
30 min	24 min
60 min	48 min

Table 1.2: Baseline temperatures and times for popular categories of food

Category	Notes	Time / temp.
Vegetables	cut into cubes or batons	180°C, 10–15 min
Frozen fries	straight from frozen	180–200°C, 12–18 min
Chicken pieces	thighs, drumsticks, wings	180–200°C, 15–22 min
Breaded breast	cutlet or fillet	190°C, 14–16 min
Ground meat patties	turkey, chicken, or beef	180–190°C, 12–18 min
Whole chicken	up to 1.5 kg	180°C, 50–75 min

Thinner pieces need less time; thicker ones need a lower temperature and longer cooking, or the inside will still be raw by the time the skin browns. The same principle applies to frozen food: start at a lower temperature

than the recipe for the fresh equivalent and add a few minutes, watching the result instead of sticking rigidly to the clock.

Safety: Internal Temperature

The color of the crust says nothing about what is happening inside a piece of meat, which is why a food thermometer is the only reliable way to check. Without one it is easy either to undercook meat or to dry it out on purpose, just to be sure.

Do not judge meat by eye

A browned crust can hide a raw center, especially in thicker pieces of chicken or larger patties. Check the internal temperature with a thermometer at the thickest part of the piece, away from the bone, because readings taken close to the bone tend to run low.

The safe internal temperatures worth cooking each meat to are easy enough to remember: chicken and turkey 74°C, ground meat (beef or pork) 71°C, and whole cuts of pork 63°C, with a three-minute rest after they come out of the basket, during which the temperature still rises slightly.

A thermometer is the cheapest insurance

A food thermometer costs very little and takes both the guesswork and the risk of undercooking out of the equation. It is the only sure way to check that meat is done without cutting it in half and losing the juices onto the plate.



Figure 1.1: A food thermometer pushed into a piece of meat in the air fryer basket — the only sure way to check doneness without cutting into it.

Accessories and Prepping Food

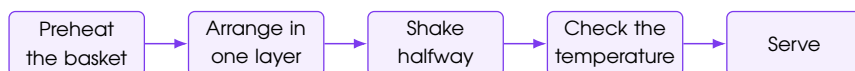
The basket on its own is enough for most of the recipes in this book, but a handful of extras make daily life easier and widen the repertoire to dishes you simply cannot cook in a bare basket.

💡 Three add-ons that genuinely earn their place

Perforated paper liners protect the bottom of the basket and make washing up easier, as long as they have holes for the air to pass through, because solid sheets of paper block the circulation. An oil sprayer lets you use a fraction of a spoonful of fat instead of a whole spoonful poured from the bottle, which really does bring the calorie count of a dish down. Kitchen

tongs are useful for turning pieces halfway through without pulling the whole basket out of the appliance.

The basic routine for working with an air fryer is the same whatever the recipe, which after a few goes makes it automatic.



Preheating the basket for 2–3 minutes before the food goes in means the time given in a recipe actually holds, because the dish meets hot air from the first second instead of warming up along with it. Skipping this step is the most common reason home cooking times come out longer than the book says.

The Most Common Beginner Mistakes

⚠ An overloaded basket is the most common mistake

Stacking food in two layers or cramming the pieces tightly together blocks the airflow. The result is the opposite of what you wanted: the food steams in its own moisture instead of turning crisp. Two batches are better than one overloaded batch, even if it takes a few minutes longer.

The second common mistake is skipping the shake halfway through, which leaves one side of the food browned and the other pale. The third is using too much oil, which on some models causes smoking, because the

excess fat drips onto the hot element and burns. The fourth, less obvious one, is opening the basket too often out of curiosity about how things are going, which lets hot air escape every time and stretches out the whole process.

All the recipes in the chapters that follow are written for a typical domestic air fryer with a capacity of 4–6 liters. If your model is smaller or larger, treat the portions and times given as a starting point rather than a fixed rule, watch the result the first time you try each recipe, and note down any adjustments for next time.

✓ Checklist: Getting started with your air fryer

- ☐ Buy a food thermometer if you do not have one already
- ☐ Stock up on perforated paper liners for the basket
- ☐ Convert your favorite oven recipe using the table in this chapter
- ☐ Learn the routine: preheat, arrange, shake, check, serve
- ☐ Set a kitchen timer for halfway through so you do not forget to shake the basket

Mornings Without Waiting for the Oven

An air fryer heats up in under a minute, which makes it excellent in the morning, when every minute counts and nobody feels like standing over a frying pan. The ten recipes below are ideas for working days and for a lazy weekend, from eggs to sweet rolls, arranged from the quickest to those that need a little more time.

What all these dishes have in common is that they need no supervision. You set the time, get on with brewing the coffee or packing the children off to school, and the appliance finishes the job and switches itself off without you.

Silicone molds are the backbone of breakfast

Small silicone muffin molds or ovenproof cups let you bake eggs, oatmeal, or little cakes straight in the basket, with nothing to watch and nothing to turn. You buy them once and use them in most of the recipes in this chapter, as well as in the desserts in the last chapter of the book.

RECIPE 1

Eggs in Silicone Molds

A quick route to soft-centered eggs with no pan of water to boil, ideal when several people in the house like their whites set to different degrees.

Ingredients: 2 eggs, a little butter for the molds, salt, pepper.

Method: Brush the molds with butter and crack an egg into each. Set the air fryer to 160°C. Cook for 9–10 minutes, until the white has set and the yolk is still runny. Season with salt and pepper just before serving, and scatter over some chives if you like.

Tip: for a firmer yolk add 2 minutes to the cooking time, and for a completely runny one take a minute off.

RECIPE 2

Baked Oatmeal with Apple and Cinnamon

Crisp on top, creamy underneath, good for a whole week from the fridge, because it keeps well and tastes fine cold too.

Ingredients: half a cup of rolled oats, one apple, diced, a spoonful of honey, a pinch of cinnamon, half a cup of milk.

Method: Mix all the ingredients in an ovenproof dish that fits inside the basket. Cook at 170°C for 12–14 minutes, until the top is golden. Serve with plain yogurt or a handful of nuts.

Variation: you can swap the apple for a pear or a handful of frozen forest fruits without changing the cooking time.

RECIPE 3

French Toast with Cinnamon

A classic sweet breakfast, with no pan-frying and no smell of oil drifting through the whole kitchen.

Ingredients: 2 slices of bread, 1 egg, 3 tablespoons of milk, a pinch of cinnamon, sugar for dusting.

Method: Beat the egg with the milk and cinnamon and dip the slices in it on both sides. Cook at 180°C for 8 minutes, turning halfway. Dust with sugar before serving and drizzle with maple syrup if you like.

Tip: slightly stale bread soaks up the egg mixture better than fresh bread and falls apart less while cooking.

RECIPE 4

Crispy Bacon

No fat spitting across the stovetop and no cleaning the hob after every breakfast.

Ingredients: 4–6 slices of bacon.

Method: Lay the slices out singly, without overlapping. Cook at 190°C for 8–10 minutes, checking after 6 minutes, because thin slices brown faster than thick-cut ones.

Tip: the rendered fat that collects under the basket can be poured into a jar and used later for frying eggs.

RECIPE 5

Egg Muffins with Bell Pepper and Spinach

A convenient breakfast to take to work, and one you can make the evening before for several days ahead.

Ingredients: 4 eggs, a handful of spinach, half a red bell pepper, diced, 2 tablespoons of grated cheese, salt, pepper.

Method: Beat the eggs and add the remaining ingredients. Pour into silicone molds. Cook at 160°C for 10–12 minutes, until the egg has set. Keep them in the fridge for up to three days and warm them through briefly before eating.

Variation: the pepper and spinach are only a suggestion; zucchini, cherry tomatoes, or leftover cooked ham work just as well.

RECIPE 6

Homemade Granola with Nuts

Cheaper and less sweet than the store-bought kind, and it lets you pick exactly the nuts and dried fruit you like.

Ingredients: a cup of rolled oats, a handful of nuts, 2 tablespoons of honey, a tablespoon of oil.

Method: Mix everything in a bowl and spread it over a perforated liner in the basket. Cook at 150°C for 10 minutes, stirring every 3 minutes, until golden. Cool it completely before transferring it to a jar, because that is when it turns crisp.

Tip: stored in an airtight jar, granola stays crisp for two weeks.



Figure 2.1: Homemade granola with nuts and honey, straight from the air fryer basket – golden and crisp once cooled.

RECIPE 7

Grilled Cheese and Ham Sandwich

Crisp outside, melted cheese inside, ready sooner than a sandwich press would take to heat up.

Ingredients: 2 slices of sandwich bread, a slice of ham, 2 slices of cheese, butter.

Method: Butter the slices on the outside and put the filling between them. Cook at 180°C for 6–7 minutes, turning halfway, until both sides are golden.

Tip: press the sandwich gently with a spatula after turning it, so the layers hold together when you cut it.

RECIPE 8

Banana Pancakes

No frying in oil, and excellent for children as well as for adults who prefer to avoid refined sugar.

Ingredients: 1 ripe banana, 1 egg, 3 tablespoons of oat flour, a pinch of cinnamon.

Method: Mash the banana and mix it with the other ingredients into a smooth batter. Shape small pancakes on perforated paper. Cook at 180°C for 8 minutes, turning halfway, until lightly golden.

Tip: the riper and more speckled the banana, the sweeter the pancakes turn out with no added sugar.

RECIPE 9

Baked Apples with Honey and Nuts

A light dessert and a sweet breakfast in one, and good as a topping for the oatmeal from the first recipe in this chapter.

Ingredients: 2 apples, a spoonful of honey, a handful of chopped nuts, a pinch of cinnamon.

Method: Core the apples and fill them with honey, nuts, and cinnamon. Cook at 170°C for 15–18 minutes, until the flesh softens but the skin has not split too far.

Tip: scoring the skin around the equator of the apple keeps it from bursting as the flesh expands unevenly.

RECIPE 10

Cinnamon Rolls from Ready-Made Dough

For a Sunday morning when there is no time to make dough, and the smell of cinnamon fills the kitchen anyway.

Ingredients: ready-made refrigerated cinnamon rolls (from a tube, for instance), the icing supplied with the pack.

Method: Arrange the rolls in the basket with space between them, because they will rise. Cook at 160°C for 8–9 minutes, until golden. Ice them once they have cooled for a few minutes and stopped steaming.

Tip: icing spread over rolls that are still too hot simply runs down to the bottom, so wait a moment until they stop steaming.

Yeast dough needs room

Rolls and other bakes made with yeast or baking powder rise as they cook, so setting them too close together ends in one fused slab instead of separate portions. Leave a few centimeters between them, even if that means two batches instead of one.

Breakfast in under fifteen minutes

Most of the recipes in this chapter fit into a window of 8–15 minutes from switching the air fryer on to putting food on the plate, which makes it faster than a traditional pan for most morning dishes, and it leaves fewer dishes to wash.

☒ **Checklist: Breakfast supplies for the kitchen**

- ☐ Silicone molds for eggs and muffins
- ☐ Perforated paper for baking
- ☐ A week's worth of eggs, rolled oats, and bacon
- ☐ A favorite ready-made shortcut for a lazy morning, such as roll dough

03

Poultry and Meat for Dinner

Meat Without Watching the Pan

This chapter holds thirteen meat dishes, from quick patties to a whole chicken cooked in the basket. What they share is less fat than pan-frying and skin as crisp as anything from the oven, only faster, with no need to keep turning away from everything else going on in the kitchen.

Most of the recipes can be put together from what is already in your fridge, so treat the seasonings listed as a starting point. If you like bolder flavors, throw in chili or more smoked paprika; the cooking times stay virtually unchanged.

RECIPE 11

Whole Roast Chicken

Sunday dinner without dirtying a large roasting tray and without heating a whole oven for hours.

Ingredients: chicken up to 1.5 kg, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, salt, pepper, sweet paprika, granulated garlic.

Method: Rub the chicken with olive oil and the seasonings, including under the skin on the breast, so the flavor reaches deeper. Cook breast side up at 180°C for 50–65 minutes, turning it over halfway through. Check

for 74°C with a thermometer at the thickest part of the thigh before you take the chicken out of the basket.

Tip: if the chicken does not fit whole in the basket, cut off the legs and cook them separately for the last 20 minutes.

RECIPE 12

Chicken Thighs in Honey and Mustard

A sweet, tangy glaze with no hours of marinating, good for a quick dinner during the week.

Ingredients: 4 chicken thighs, a spoonful of honey, a spoonful of mustard, salt, pepper.

Method: Mix the honey with the mustard and seasonings and rub it over the thighs. Cook at 190°C for 22–25 minutes, turning halfway, until the skin turns glossy and browned at the edges.

Tip: thighs with the skin on come out juicier than skinless ones, because the fat under the skin protects the meat from drying out.

RECIPE 13

Crispy Breaded Chicken Breast

A schnitzel result without a liter of oil in the pan, excellent served with lemon and potato salad.

Ingredients: chicken breast, egg, breadcrumbs, flour, salt, pepper, paprika.

Method: Dust the breast with flour, dip it in egg, and coat it in breadcrumbs mixed with the seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 14–16 minutes, turning halfway and spraying lightly with oil on both sides for even browning.



Figure 3.1: Chicken thighs in a honey and mustard glaze – the crisp, glossy skin is the result of short, intense cooking without marinating.

Tip: flatten a thicker breast a little with a mallet before breading it, so it cooks evenly all the way through.

RECIPE 14

BBQ Wings

Crisp skin, with the sauce added at the end rather than at the start, so it does not scorch on the bottom of the basket.

Ingredients: 8 wings, salt, pepper, smoked paprika, BBQ sauce to serve.

Method: Season the wings and cook at 200°C for 20–24 minutes, shaking the basket every 8 minutes. Brush on the BBQ sauce only once they are cooked, so the sugar in the sauce does not burn and leave a bitter aftertaste.

Tip: patting the wings dry with paper towel before seasoning helps the skin turn crisper.

RECIPE 15

Ground Turkey Patties

A lighter version of the classic meat patty, good in a sandwich or on a plate with a fresh salad.

Ingredients: 400 g ground turkey, onion, egg, breadcrumbs, salt, pepper, herbes de Provence.

Method: Mix all the ingredients and shape them into patties. Cook at 185°C for 12–16 minutes, turning halfway, until the center reaches 71°C and is no longer pink.

Variation: grated zucchini added to the meat mixture keeps the patties moist despite the lean turkey.

RECIPE 16

Pork Neck Steaks

Juicy inside, browned at the edges, like something off a Sunday grill, only available all year round.

Ingredients: 2 slices of pork neck, garlic, marjoram, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of oil.

Method: Rub the meat with the seasonings and oil and leave it for 15 minutes, so the flavors have time to settle in. Cook at 190°C for 18–20 minutes, turning halfway.

Tip: pork neck carries plenty of intramuscular fat, which keeps it juicy even if it cooks a little longer than planned.

RECIPE 17

BBQ Pork Ribs

No hours of braising in the oven, yet just as tender and falling off the bone.

Ingredients: pork ribs, dry BBQ rub, BBQ sauce to serve.

Method: Rub the ribs with the seasoning and wrap them loosely in aluminum foil. Cook at 160°C for 35 minutes, then unwrap the foil, brush them with sauce, and finish at 200°C for 8–10 minutes, until the surface caramelizes.

Tip: the foil in the first stage works like a miniature steam oven, so the meat softens without drying out.

RECIPE 18

Pork Tenderloin with Herbs

Lean meat that is easy to overcook, so timing matters more here than it does with fattier cuts.

Ingredients: pork tenderloin, garlic, rosemary, thyme, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of olive oil.

Method: Rub the meat with the seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 16–18 minutes, turning halfway, to an internal temperature of 63°C, then leave it to rest for 3 minutes before slicing, so the juices redistribute.

Tip: slicing on the diagonal, across the grain, makes even a lean tenderloin seem more tender on the plate.

RECIPE 19

Breaded Pork Cutlet

A home classic without spitting oil and without frying in batches in a small pan.

Ingredients: 2 pork cutlets, egg, breadcrumbs, flour, salt, pepper.

Method: Flatten the cutlets, dust them with flour, dip them in egg, and coat them in breadcrumbs. Cook at 190°C for 12–14 minutes, turning halfway, until the coating is evenly golden.

Tip: pressing the coating on with your palm after the breadcrumbs go on helps it cling to the meat while it cooks.

RECIPE 20

Beef Burgers

Juicy inside and no falling apart when you turn them, provided you use one simple shaping trick.

Ingredients: 400 g ground beef, salt, pepper, granulated garlic, buns and toppings to serve.

Method: Shape flat patties and press a dimple into the middle of each with your thumb, so they do not swell into a ball as they cook. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning halfway.

Tip: do not work the meat too hard while shaping it; the less handling, the juicier the burger on the plate.

RECIPE 21

Meatballs in Tomato Sauce

Good for dinner and for lunch the next day, because they taste fine reheated.

Ingredients: 400 g ground meat, onion, egg, breadcrumbs, tomato sauce to serve.

Method: Shape small meatballs and arrange them in a single layer. Cook at 185°C for 12–14 minutes, shaking the basket halfway. Serve them with warmed tomato sauce poured over, with pasta or grains.

Tip: meatballs of the same size, ideally about as big as a golf ball, cook evenly in the same amount of time.

RECIPE 22

Curry Chicken

An aromatic alternative to plain roast chicken, ready faster than a curry simmered in a pot.

Ingredients: 400 g diced chicken, a spoonful of curry paste, a spoonful of oil, salt.

Method: Mix the chicken with the curry paste and oil. Cook at 190°C for 14–16 minutes, shaking the basket every 5 minutes, until the meat browns and is cooked through.

Tip: a spoonful of plain yogurt added to the marinade tenderizes the meat and softens the heat of the curry paste.

RECIPE 23

Beef Steak

Seared outside, pink inside, with no pan filling the whole kitchen with smoke.

Ingredients: beef steak 2–3 cm thick, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of olive oil.

Method: Rub the steak with olive oil and the seasonings just before cooking, not earlier, so the salt does not draw out the juices. Cook at 200°C for 8–10 minutes for medium, turning halfway. Rest it for 5 minutes before slicing.

Tip: a steak taken out of the fridge in advance and brought to room temperature cooks more evenly than a cold one.

💡 Breading holds better with a little oil

Dry breaded cutlets can come out pale and floury. A quick spray of oil on both sides before cooking gives a result close to frying, because the fat helps the breadcrumbs brown instead of staying light and hard.

⚠️ Lean meat dries out easily

Pork tenderloin and skinless chicken breast carry little of the fat that would protect them from drying out. Stick to the lower end of the time given in the recipe and check the temperature with a thermometer, rather than cooking on just in case, because a few minutes too many make a real difference.

 Sauce at the end, not at the start

Sauces that contain sugar, such as BBQ or honey and mustard, should go on in the second half of cooking or right after it. Brushed onto raw meat, they burn before the meat has had time to cook, and they leave a bitter taste on the surface.

 Checklist: Supplies for a week of meat dishes

- ☐ A thermometer for checking the internal temperature of meat
- ☐ Basic seasonings: sweet and smoked paprika, granulated garlic, herbes de Provence
- ☐ Your favorite BBQ sauce and mustard in the fridge
- ☐ Aluminum foil for dishes that need longer, gentler cooking

Light Meals for Every Day

Fish and vegetables cooked in an air fryer keep more of their moisture than they would in an oven, because the shorter cooking time never gets a chance to dry them out. The thirteen recipes in this chapter cover fish, seafood, and fully plant-based dishes, so there is something here for a quick dinner during the week as well as for a meat-free evening.

Fish is a rewarding ingredient here, because unlike meat it needs no long seasoning or marinating. Salt, a squeeze of lemon, and a few minutes in hot air are enough for the dish to be ready.

RECIPE 24

Salmon Baked with Lemon and Dill

A simple dinner in under fifteen minutes that looks far more impressive than it was laborious.

Ingredients: 2 salmon fillets, lemon, dill, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of olive oil.

Method: Drizzle the fillets with olive oil and lemon juice and season them with salt, pepper, and dill. Cook at 190°C for 8–10 minutes, without turning, until the fish turns opaque and flakes easily with a fork.

Tip: skin side down, salmon loses fewer juices, so if the fillet has skin, lay it that way.

RECIPE 25

Garlic Shrimp

Ready before you have finished setting the table, good as a starter or tossed through pasta.

Ingredients: 300 g peeled shrimp, 2 cloves of garlic, a tablespoon of olive oil, salt, parsley.

Method: Mix the shrimp with the garlic and olive oil. Cook at 190°C for 6–8 minutes, shaking the basket halfway. Scatter chopped parsley over before serving, and add a squeeze of fresh lemon if you like.

Tip: shrimp overcook easily, so if they are already firm and pink after six minutes, take them out straight away.

RECIPE 26

Breaded Cod

A homemade version of fish and chips without deep-frying, good paired with the fries from the chapter on snacks.

Ingredients: 2 cod fillets, egg, breadcrumbs, flour, salt, pepper.

Method: Dust the fish with flour, dip it in egg, and coat it in breadcrumbs. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning carefully halfway, so the delicate flesh does not break up.

Tip: thaw frozen cod thoroughly first and pat it dry with paper towel, or the coating will come away during cooking.

RECIPE 27

Whole Baked Trout

An impressive dish that looks more laborious than it is, good for dinner when guests are coming.

Ingredients: gutted trout, sliced lemon, dill, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of olive oil.

Method: Stuff the cavity of the fish with lemon slices and dill and drizzle olive oil over the outside. Cook at 180°C for 12–15 minutes, depending on the size of the fish, until the flesh along the backbone lifts easily off the bones.

Tip: two or three slashes along the back of the fish help it cook evenly right through to the bone.

RECIPE 28

Tuna Steak

Seared outside, pink inside, in a style closer to Japanese cooking than to traditional fish off the grill.

Ingredients: tuna steak 2 cm thick, soy sauce, sesame seeds, a tablespoon of oil.

Method: Drizzle the steak with oil and soy sauce and press the edges into the sesame seeds. Cook at 200°C for 5–6 minutes, turning halfway, so the center stays slightly raw, as in a classic tuna tartare.

Tip: the freshness of the fish matters more here than in other recipes, because the center stays raw, so buy tuna intended to be eaten raw.

RECIPE 29

Whole Roasted Cauliflower

A striking alternative to the usual vegetable side, and one you can serve as a main course for vegetarians.

Ingredients: small cauliflower, a tablespoon of olive oil, sweet paprika, granulated garlic, salt.

Method: Drizzle the cauliflower with olive oil and rub the seasonings over every side, including between the florets. Cook at 170°C for 25–30 minutes, until a fork slides freely into the middle of the head.

Tip: blanching the cauliflower in boiling water for 3 minutes beforehand cuts several minutes off the time in the basket.

RECIPE 30

Sweet Potato Fries

Sweeter and more nourishing than ordinary potatoes, though they need a little more attention while they cook.

Ingredients: 2 sweet potatoes, a tablespoon of oil, salt, smoked paprika.

Method: Cut the sweet potatoes into batons and toss them with the oil and seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 15–18 minutes, shaking the basket every 5 minutes, so their edges do not stick together.

Tip: a spoonful of potato starch tossed with the sweet potatoes before cooking gives noticeably crisper edges.

RECIPE 31

Brussels Sprouts with Parmesan

Crisp edges that win over even the skeptics who are convinced they dislike sprouts.

Ingredients: 300 g Brussels sprouts, halved, a tablespoon of olive oil, grated Parmesan, salt, pepper.

Method: Toss the sprouts with the olive oil and seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 12–14 minutes, shaking halfway. Scatter the Parmesan over for the last 2 minutes of cooking, so the cheese melts without scorching.

Tip: halving them rather than cooking them whole doubles the surface that browns and crisps.

RECIPE 32

Bell Peppers Stuffed with Grains

A filling vegetarian dish for a whole dinner, and good reheated the next day.

Ingredients: 2 bell peppers, a cup of cooked grains, onion, cheese, salt, pepper, herbs.

Method: Hollow out the peppers, fill them with the mixture of grains, onion, and seasonings, and top them with cheese. Cook at 180°C for 15–18 minutes, until the pepper softens but keeps its shape.

Variation: you can swap the grains for cooked rice or quinoa without changing anything else in the recipe.

RECIPE 33

Zucchini in Parmesan Breading

A crisp vegetable snack, and a good side for dishes from this chapter and the previous one.

Ingredients: sliced zucchini, egg, breadcrumbs mixed with Parmesan, salt.

Method: Dip the zucchini slices in egg and coat them in the Parmesan breadcrumbs. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning halfway, until the coating is crisp.

Tip: thicker slices, around a centimeter, hold the coating better than thin ones, which easily turn mushy.

RECIPE 34

Baked Falafel

Crisp outside, soft inside, with no deep-frying and no smell of oil hanging in the kitchen.

Ingredients: a can of chickpeas, garlic, cilantro, cumin, onion, a tablespoon of flour.

Method: Blend the ingredients into a smooth paste and shape it into balls. Cook at 190°C for 14–16 minutes, shaking the basket halfway, so they brown evenly on all sides.

Tip: the mixture should be firm enough that the balls do not fall apart in your hand; add another spoonful of flour if you need to.

RECIPE 35

Sesame Tofu

A plant-based source of protein with a crisp shell, good even for people who usually give tofu a wide berth.

Ingredients: 300 g tofu, soy sauce, potato starch, sesame seeds.

Method: Cut the tofu into cubes, drizzle them with soy sauce, and coat them in the starch and sesame seeds. Cook at 190°C for 12–15 minutes, shaking the basket every 5 minutes, until the cubes are crisp on the outside.



Figure 4.1: Sesame tofu with a crisp crust is a perfect example of a plant-based dish made in an air fryer.

Tip: pressing the tofu under a weight for 15 minutes before you coat it drives out the water and improves the crispness.

RECIPE 36

Mushrooms Stuffed with Cheese

A simple snack you can make from whatever is usually in the fridge, with no shopping in advance.

Ingredients: 8 large mushrooms, cheese, garlic, parsley, salt.

Method: Remove the stems from the mushrooms and fill the caps with grated cheese mixed with garlic. Cook at 180°C for 8–10 minutes, until the cheese melts and browns lightly on top.

Tip: you can chop the stems, fry them with the garlic, and add them to the filling instead of throwing them away.

Fish needs no turning

Thinner fish fillets are usually best cooked without turning, because the air fryer heats them from above and below at the same time. Turning raises the risk of the delicate flesh breaking up, especially with white fish such as cod or pollock.

Too high a temperature dries fish out

Fish sets faster than meat and turns dry and stringy if it cooks too long. Check for doneness 1–2 minutes before the lower end of the time given in the recipe, especially the first time you cook a fillet of a given thickness.

 Dinner in fifteen minutes

Picture a Tuesday evening: the salmon with lemon goes into the basket, you chop a salad while it cooks, and ten minutes later both dishes are ready at once, with no pan to watch and no greasy dish to wash. That is a realistic scenario for most of the fish recipes in this chapter.

 Vegetables like a higher temperature than you would think

Root and brassica vegetables, such as cauliflower or Brussels sprouts, take temperatures of 180–190°C well; the heat browns their edges and draws out their sweetness instead of leaving them bland, the way steaming does.

 Checklist: Supplies for fish and vegetarian dishes

- ☐ Frozen or fresh fish fillets for a quick dinner
- ☐ A can of chickpeas in the cupboard for falafel
- ☐ Sweet potatoes and Brussels sprouts as an alternative to ordinary potatoes
- ☐ Tofu and soy sauce for meat-free days

Movie Night Without Ordering In

This chapter holds twelve snacks and sides, from classic fries to baked nachos. Most of them come out of whatever is already sitting in the freezer, only without the oil for deep-frying and without the smell that hangs around the kitchen for an hour afterwards.

It is also a good chapter for cooking together with children, because shaping fritters, onion rings, or pretzels calls for no hot oil and no standing at the stove.

RECIPE 37

Classic Potato Fries

Crisp outside, soft inside, without a liter of oil in a pot.

Ingredients: 3 potatoes, a tablespoon of oil, salt.

Method: Cut the potatoes into batons, soak them in cold water for 15 minutes, pat them dry, and toss them with the oil. Cook at 190°C for 18–20 minutes, shaking the basket every 5 minutes, until they are golden all over.

Tip: batons of even thickness, roughly the size of a little finger, cook evenly in the same amount of time.



Figure 5.1: Golden potato fries cooked in the basket without any great quantity of oil.

RECIPE 38

Potato Fritters

No flipping in a pan full of sizzling fat and no oil spitting onto your shirt.

Ingredients: 3 potatoes, grated and squeezed dry, onion, egg, flour, salt.

Method: Mix all the ingredients and shape flat fritters on perforated paper. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning halfway, until the edges turn crisp.

Tip: squeezing the excess water out of the grated potatoes thoroughly is the most important step, otherwise the fritters will fall apart.

RECIPE 39

Breaded Onion Rings

A crisp side for the burger from the chapter on meat, and good on their own as a snack with a beer.

Ingredients: 1 large onion, cut into rings, egg, flour, breadcrumbs, salt, paprika.

Method: Coat the rings in flour, then in egg, then in breadcrumbs mixed with the seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning halfway, until the coating is evenly golden.

Tip: the thicker rings from the inside of the onion hold the coating better than the thin outer ones, which split easily.

RECIPE 40

Cheese Sticks

Melted cheese in a crisp shell, ready in a few minutes, straight from the freezer to the plate.

Ingredients: frozen mozzarella sticks, breadcrumbs (if they are not already breaded).

Method: Arrange the frozen sticks in a single layer, without thawing them. Cook at 200°C for 6–8 minutes, watching that the cheese does not start leaking out through cracks in the coating.

Tip: a few minutes in the freezer just before cooking, if the sticks have had time to thaw, helps seal the coating.

RECIPE 41

Homemade Chicken Nuggets

Better than the frozen kind, with no artificial coating and no mystery additives on the label.

Ingredients: chicken breast, cut into cubes, egg, breadcrumbs, salt, paprika.

Method: Coat the pieces of chicken in egg, then in breadcrumbs mixed with the seasonings. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, shaking the basket halfway, until every piece is evenly browned.

Tip: pieces of similar size, roughly as big as a thumb, cook in the same amount of time with no need to sort them.

RECIPE 42

Kale Chips

A light alternative to potato chips, ready faster than it takes to wash the bowl afterwards.

Ingredients: a handful of kale leaves, stems removed, a tablespoon of olive oil, salt.

Method: Toss the leaves with the olive oil and salt. Cook at 150°C for 5–7 minutes, watching closely, because thin leaves scorch very quickly and go from crisp to burnt in a matter of seconds.

Tip: drying the leaves thoroughly after washing them is crucial, because moisture on the surface makes the chips steam instead of crisping.

RECIPE 43

Pierogi from the Freezer

Crisp at the edges instead of rubbery the way they are after boiling, a good alternative to the traditional method.

Ingredients: frozen pierogi, a tablespoon of oil.

Method: Spray the pierogi with oil on both sides. Cook at 190°C for 10–12 minutes, turning halfway, without thawing them first.

Variation: both potato and cheese pierogi and meat ones work beautifully, while fruit-filled pierogi are worth cooking a few minutes less.

RECIPE 44

Cheese Quesadilla

Ready in less time than it takes to heat a pan, good for a quick lunch or a snack after school.

Ingredients: 2 tortillas, a handful of grated cheese, corn and bell pepper optional.

Method: Spread the cheese over one tortilla and cover it with the other. Cook at 180°C for 6–8 minutes, turning halfway, until the cheese melts and the tortilla turns crisp.

Tip: two toothpicks pushed through the edges hold the tortillas together while you turn them, and they come out easily afterwards.

RECIPE 45

Baked Nachos

Shared straight out of the basket for an evening in front of a series, with no need to heat a large oven.

Ingredients: tortilla chips, grated cheese, chopped tomato, jalapeño optional.

Method: Arrange the chips in an ovenproof dish and scatter the cheese and toppings over them. Cook at 180°C for 4–5 minutes, until the cheese melts, watching that the chips do not scorch at the edges of the dish.

Tip: a thin layer of chips rather than a tall pile means the cheese melts evenly over every piece.

RECIPE 46

Cheese Croissants

Made from ready-made pastry, for a savory snack instead of a sweet one, ready in the time an oven would still be preheating.

Ingredients: ready-made puff pastry triangles, cheese cut into strips.

Method: Wrap the cheese in the pastry triangles and shape them into croissants. Cook at 180°C for 10–12 minutes, until they turn golden and the cheese runs a little at the edges.

Tip: puff pastry cooks best when it is slightly chilled, so do not leave it too long in a warm kitchen before shaping it.

RECIPE 47

Corn on the Cob

Sweeter than boiled corn, with no pot of water and no waiting for it to come to the boil.

Ingredients: 2 ears of corn, a tablespoon of butter, salt.

Method: Brush the ears with butter and season them with salt. Cook at 200°C for 10–12 minutes, turning them every few minutes, until the kernels char lightly.

Tip: a squeeze of lime just before serving is a simple way to add a Mexican note with no extra ingredients.

RECIPE 48

Soft Pretzels

A homemade version of the pretzels from a street stall, with a crisp shell and a soft middle.

Ingredients: ready-made pretzel or bread dough, egg for brushing, coarse salt.

Method: Shape the pretzels, brush them with beaten egg, and sprinkle them with salt. Cook at 180°C for 8–10 minutes, until they are golden all over.

Tip: brushing with egg just before cooking, rather than in advance, gives a glossier, more even crust.

 Frozen food needs no thawing

Most frozen snacks, from cheese sticks to pierogi, can go into the basket straight from the freezer. Thawing before cooking often makes the texture worse, because the coating soaks up moisture and loses its crispness.

 Cheese leaking out of the coating means the temperature is too high

Cheese sticks and similar snacks with a melting filling burst before the coating has had time to brown if the temperature is too high. Stick to the lower end of the recommended temperature and watch the time more closely towards the end of cooking than at the start.

 Soaking potatoes makes a difference

Soaking cut potatoes in cold water before cooking rinses the excess starch off the surface, so fries and fritters come out crisp rather than soft and gray, even without an extra measure of oil.

 Checklist: Supplies for a snack night

- ☐ Freezer staples: pierogi, cheese sticks, nuggets
- ☐ Tortillas and cheese for a quick quesadilla
- ☐ Coarse salt and basic seasonings

Sweet Things Without Heating the Whole Oven

Baking a dessert for two people in a full-size oven means wasting electricity on heating empty space. An air fryer does the same job on a smaller scale and in less time, and it does not turn the kitchen into a sauna in summer. The twelve recipes in this chapter close the book.

Most of them are made in small ovenproof dishes or silicone molds, so before you start, make sure yours fit your basket. That is the one element that differs between models.

RECIPE 49

Chocolate Brownie in a Mold

Moist in the middle with a crisp top, enough for two portions, without baking a whole tray in advance.

Ingredients: 3 tablespoons of flour, 2 tablespoons of cocoa, 3 tablespoons of sugar, an egg, 2 tablespoons of melted butter.

Method: Mix the ingredients into a smooth batter and pour it into a small ovenproof mold. Cook at 160°C for 12–14 minutes, until the center stops wobbling but a skewer still comes out slightly moist.

Tip: a handful of chocolate chunks stirred into the batter before baking gives pockets of melted chocolate inside.

RECIPE 50

Mini Apple Pie

An autumn classic in a version for a single mold, made without rolling out a large sheet of pastry.

Ingredients: 2 apples, diced, cinnamon, sugar, a piece of ready-made shortcrust pastry.

Method: Mix the apples with the cinnamon and sugar, transfer them to a mold, and cover them with the pastry. Cook at 170°C for 18–20 minutes, until the pastry browns and the apples are soft underneath.

Tip: a few slashes in the top of the pastry let the steam escape, which keeps the base from going soggy.

RECIPE 51

Bananas in Puff Pastry

Three ingredients and a patisserie result, ready before you have finished brewing the coffee to go with it.

Ingredients: 2 bananas, a piece of puff pastry, sugar for dusting.

Method: Wrap the bananas in strips of puff pastry and dust them with sugar. Cook at 180°C for 10–12 minutes, until the pastry is golden and crisp on the outside.

Tip: a piece of chocolate wrapped in with the banana turns this dessert into something closer to a crepe suzette.

RECIPE 52

Oat Cookies

Crisp at the edges, soft in the middle, with no refined sugar in the mix.

Ingredients: a cup of rolled oats, a banana, a handful of raisins, a spoonful of honey.

Method: Mash the banana and mix it with the remaining ingredients. Shape small mounds on perforated paper. Cook at 160°C for 10–12 minutes, until they turn lightly golden at the edges.

Tip: a teaspoon of peanut butter added to the mixture gives the cookies a deeper, nuttier flavor.

RECIPE 53

Baked Peaches with Cinnamon

A summer dessert ready in a few minutes, and good with a scoop of vanilla ice cream on top.

Ingredients: 2 peaches, halved, a spoonful of honey, cinnamon.

Method: Drizzle the peach halves with honey and dust them with cinnamon. Cook at 180°C for 8–10 minutes, until the flesh softens and caramelizes lightly at the edges.

Tip: slightly firmer, underripe peaches stand up to baking better than very ripe ones, which fall apart easily.

RECIPE 54

Chocolate Muffins

Classic little cakes without switching on a large oven for half an hour for a few of them.

Ingredients: half a cup of flour, 2 tablespoons of cocoa, an egg, 3 tablespoons of sugar, 3 tablespoons of oil, a teaspoon of baking powder.

Method: Mix the ingredients into a smooth batter and fill the silicone molds halfway, because the batter will rise. Cook at 160°C for 12–14 minutes, until a skewer comes out dry.

Tip: do not mix the batter longer than you need to; overmixing makes muffins tough instead of fluffy.

RECIPE 55

Apple Crumble

A crumble without baking a large dish of it, just right for a chilly evening.

Ingredients: 2 apples, diced, cinnamon, 3 tablespoons of flour, 2 tablespoons of butter, 2 tablespoons of sugar.

Method: Put the apples and cinnamon in a small dish. Rub the flour, butter, and sugar into a crumble and scatter it over the top. Cook at 170°C for 15–18 minutes, until the crumble browns and turns crisp.

Tip: the butter for the crumble should be cold and cut into cubes, so the topping keeps its lumpy texture instead of collapsing into one solid mass.

RECIPE 56

Croissants with Chocolate Spread

Made from ready-made pastry, ready faster than brewing a pot of tea, perfect for unexpected visitors.

Ingredients: ready-made puff pastry triangles, chocolate hazelnut spread or another chocolate spread.

Method: Put a little spread on the wide end of each triangle and roll it up into a croissant. Cook at 180°C for 8–10 minutes, until they turn golden, watching that the filling does not start leaking out too much.

Tip: a small amount of spread inside is the key; any excess will run out during baking anyway.

RECIPE 57

Baked Pears in Maple Syrup

An elegant dessert for guests, ready in a quarter of an hour, with no elaborate plating.

Ingredients: 2 pears, halved, maple syrup, a handful of walnuts.

Method: Drizzle the pears with syrup and scatter the walnuts over them. Cook at 180°C for 10–12 minutes, until the flesh softens slightly but the pears keep their shape.

Tip: a spoonful of cream cheese in the middle of each half before baking turns this dessert into something closer to a cheesecake tart.

RECIPE 58

Chocolate Chip Cookies

Crisp edges, a soft center, without a whole tray at once when you only want to bake a few.

Ingredients: half a cup of flour, 3 tablespoons of butter, 2 tablespoons of sugar, a handful of chocolate chunks, an egg.

Method: Mix the ingredients into a dough, shape small balls, and flatten them slightly. Cook at 160°C for 8–10 minutes, in batches of a few at a time, so they do not stick together.

Tip: dough chilled in the fridge for 15 minutes before baking spreads less and gives thicker cookies.

RECIPE 59

Mini Cheesecake

A creamy center with no water bath in the oven, enough for one gathering over coffee.

Ingredients: 200 g curd cheese or cream cheese, an egg, 3 tablespoons of sugar, a tablespoon of flour, crushed cookies for the base.

Method: Line the base of the mold with the crushed cookies and pour the cheese mixture over them. Cook at 150°C for 20–22 minutes, until the center is just set. Cool it in the mold before turning it out, so it does not lose its shape.

Tip: cheesecake tastes best after a few hours in the fridge, once the filling has set completely and slices more easily.

RECIPE 60

Doughnuts from Ready-Made Dough

No pot of hot oil and no risk of burns, a few minutes from idea to plate.

Ingredients: ready-made rounds of doughnut dough (from a tube, for instance), powdered sugar or icing.

Method: Arrange the rounds of dough in the basket with space between them. Cook at 180°C for 5–6 minutes, turning halfway. Toss them in powdered sugar as soon as they come out, while they are still warm and the sugar will stick.

Tip: cinnamon mixed into the powdered sugar is a simple way to get a different flavor without changing the whole recipe.

💡 Lower temperatures for baking than for meat

Cakes and cookies bake well at lower temperatures than meat, usually 150–170°C, because fiercer heat scorches the top before the middle has had time to cook through. If a dessert is browning too quickly, cover it loosely with a piece of aluminum foil.

⚠️ Do not fill the basket with dough all at once

Cookies and balls of dough rise as they bake and need space on every side, so the air can flow around them. Bake in smaller batches instead of throwing everything in at once, even if that means two or three rounds.

Summary

The sixty recipes in this book, from morning eggs to evening cookies, all rest on the same few principles from the first chapter: do not overload the basket, shake it halfway through cooking, check the internal temperature of meat with a thermometer, and bake at a lower temperature than you cook meat. Once those habits are second nature, you will stop consulting the tables and start converting your own recipes in your head, matching the time and temperature to the particular piece of food in front of you.

An air fryer will not replace every appliance in the kitchen, and a soup pot or a large oven for holiday roasting still have their place, but for everyday dinners, quick breakfasts, and evening snacks it is faster than an oven and less trouble than a pan full of oil. The greatest value of this book is not any single recipe, but the routine you can repeat every day without reaching for the manual each time you want to cook something new.

In time you will also notice which recipes suit the rhythm of your day. For some people it will be a quick breakfast before leaving the house, for others a Saturday dinner that does not mean an hour at the stove. The book does not end on the last page; it begins the moment the first recipe reaches your plate.

One routine for every recipe

Preheat the basket, arrange the food in a single layer, shake it halfway through, check that it is done, and serve. The same sequence works from eggs at breakfast to a steak at dinner; only the temperature and the time change.

☒ **Checklist: Before you put this book down**

- ☐ Pick one recipe for tomorrow and check that you have all the ingredients
- ☐ Pin the temperature table from the first chapter somewhere visible in the kitchen
- ☐ Buy a food thermometer if you do not have one already
- ☐ Stock up on basic frozen staples for days when there is no time to cook
- ☐ Convert your favorite oven recipe for the air fryer and test it this week