



COOKING 101

REAL FOOD MADE SIMPLE

with Olivia Borer

WEEK 1: INTRO TO COOKING

WEEK 1 PLAN

VIDEO: What is Cooking 101?

In this video, I introduce you to Cooking 101 and explain how the program will work, as well as break down what we will cover each week and the format it will be presented.

PDF: Schedule of Cooking 101

This will be your course schedule to help stay on track throughout the 8 weeks and make it easy to refer back and find recipes or videos.

VIDEO: How To Dice & Slice

Before we jump into our first recipes in week 2, let's cover the basics of dicing and slicing to help save you time!

PDF: Grocery Store Ratings & Reviews

Learn which grocery stores get an A when it comes to produce quality and selection, organic selection, meat quality and selection, real food convenience items, and pre-cut vegetable options. Plus, read each stores individual review.

VIDEO: Which Cooking Fats are Best?

In this video, we'll break down which cooking fats are best and which should be in your trash can by the end of the video!

PFC BALANCED EATING

P = Protein

Choose: 3-6 oz of: Beef, chicken, turkey, pork, bacon, WHOLE eggs, wild caught seafood, no sugar added precooked sausages, etc (any cut except super lean cuts of meat)

Avoid: Processed meats, soy protein, beans or other legume "protein" sources (these have more carbs than protein and are counted there), meat substitutes

F = Fat

Hot uses: coconut oil, sustainable palm oil, butter, ghee (clarified butter), lard, tallow

Medium-Heat uses: (organic, extra-virgin, and cold-pressed is ideal) avocado oil, extra virgin olive oil

Cold uses: Sesame oil, flaxseed oil, nut oils (NOTE: these are NOT to be cooked with)

Other: Olives, coconut milk, unsweetened coconut flakes, coconut butter, avocado, raw or dry roasted nuts, seeds, and their butters (no added vegetable oils or sugar), organic full fat dairy (limited - not recommended)

Avoid: Canola oil, corn oil, soy oil, vegetable oil, grapeseed oil, rice bran oil, safflower oil, "buttery" spreads, "lite" butters, shortening, margarine, cottonseed oil, and any partially-hydrogenated oils or trans fats (check ingredient lists - they are EVERYWHERE)

**See also the Cooking Fats & Oils video and PDF*

C = Carbohydrates

Choose: 1-3 cups of non-starchy vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, eggplant, peppers, onions, garlic, asparagus, carrots, zucchini, green beans, yellow squash, spaghetti squash, tomatoes, jicama, kohlrabi, leafy greens, etc

Add starchy vegetables or fruit on more active days: sweet potato, potato, plantains, butternut squash, acorn squash, parsnips, pumpkin, pears, apples, bananas, berries, melons, kiwi, pineapple, etc.

Gluten free grains/legumes should be limited: rice, quinoa, oats, beans, lentils.

Avoid: Gluten-containing grains, pasta, candy, breads, cereal, granola, muffins, cakes, pastries, fried or breaded foods, cookies, added sugar or artificial sweeteners, or any other processed foods

Names for sugar (beyond the obvious): turbinado sugar, agave nectar, barley malt, brown rice syrup, corn syrup, dextran, dextrose, fructose, glucose, HFCS, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltodextrin, maltose, mannitol, sorbitol, sucrose, erythritol, maltitol, xylitol, swerve, treacle, etc

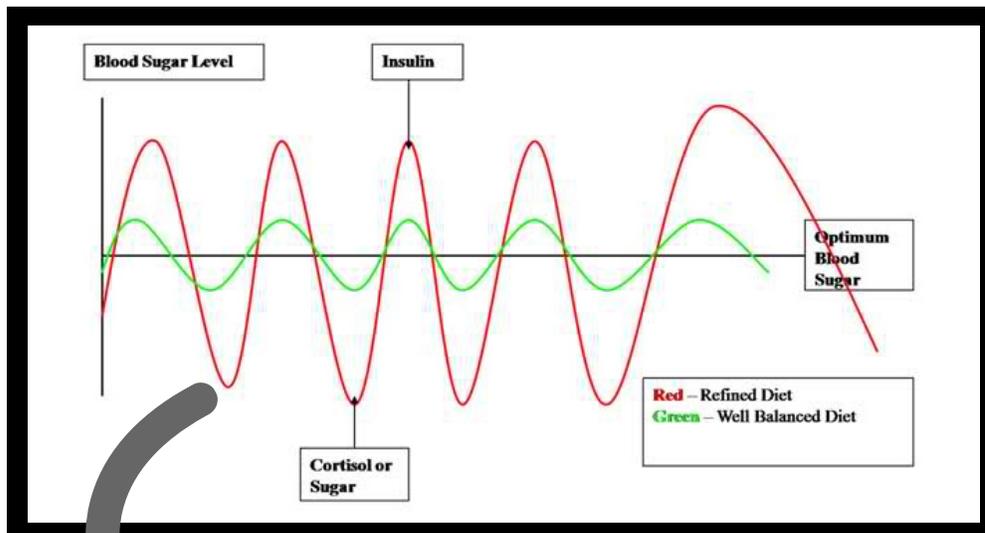
Names for artificial sweeteners: acesulfame K/acesulfame potassium, aspartame, saccharine, stevia (white/bleached), sucralose. ALWAYS AVOID ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS AT ALL COSTS

Sugars okay in limited amounts: dates, molasses, pure maple syrup, fruit as a sweetener, raw honey, green leaf extra stevia (limit - green leaf extract only), monk fruit (limit)

PFC BALANCED EATING

PFC is an approach to balanced eating, as each letter stands for one of the three macronutrients: **protein, fat, and carbohydrates**. If you want to experience **consistent energy levels, a stable mood, improved mental clarity, decreased sugar cravings, weight loss, and support your brain and metabolism**, then PFC eating is for you.

The Blood Sugar Roller Coaster



KNOW THIS:

Chronically dysregulated blood sugar levels are **EXTREMELY** stressful to the body. If left unmanaged, over time they can lead to:

- Inflammation
- Weight loss resistance
- Nutrient deficiencies
- Joint pain
- Headaches
- Cravings
- Type II Diabetes
- Cardiovascular issues
- High cholesterol
- Sleep disturbances
- Alzheimer's Disease
- And so much more!

Dysregulated Blood Sugar

Caused by an unbalanced diet rich in excess refined carbohydrates and/or low in quality protein and healthy fats.

Eat refined/excess carbs → Blood glucose rises → Pancreas releases insulin → Insulin shuttles glucose to muscles/liver

HOWEVER, if the muscles/liver are FULL and have no more room for stored glucose, the remaining glucose either is converted to BODY FAT or *circulates* in the blood stream. Eventually, we see a large drop in blood sugar levels as the body manages to find a place for the glucose, but as the blood sugar rapidly drops, so does our ENERGY and we begin to crave sweets. Thus the cycle begins again and the negative effects build up over time.

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3. How to dice and slice
4. Choosing healthy cooking fats and oils

Week 2: Slow Cooker

Slow cooker meals are simple, delicious, and, as an awesome bonus, make your house smell amazing as they cook all day! We will cover a variety of slow cooker recipes, as well as how to prep each of them for freezing and cooking later.

Week 3: Roasted Vegetables

Not a vegetable fan? Don't give up until you've learned how to properly roast vegetables! We will cover which vegetables to choose for roasting, the cooking fats to choose for best results, and the spices that bring out all the right flavors.

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Who has time for a decent breakfast in the mornings? Enter in the egg bake, a basic recipe that can be customized a million different ways, as well as cooked and frozen for later use. Perfect for those mornings when you simply don't have time.

Week 5: Instant Pot

The Instant Pot is a kitchen device often in our cupboards, but do we actually know how to use it properly? We will cover the basics of the Instant Pot, as well as simplest ways to use it effectively.

Week 6: Skillet & Stovetop Meals

Skillet and stovetop meals are quick, one-pot meals that make meal time quick, easy, and tasty! We will also cover shortcuts on how to make these meals even faster for those "what do we do for dinner" nights.

Week 7: Casseroles

In this week, we will cover the base recipe of the most versatile casserole, as well as learn how to customize this casserole to suit all palates and preferences.

Week 8: Meal Prepping

In the final week, we will discuss meal prepping in its entirety, including how to schedule, plan, and execute a full week's worth of meals! Included will be a full meal prep plan using recipes from earlier in the course.



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**GROCERY STORE
RATINGS & REVIEWS**

GROCERY STORE RATINGS

Each store is ranked in the following categories: produce selection and quality, organic produce selection, meat selection and quality, real food convenience items*, pre-cut vegetable options, and overall price grade per quality.

**Real food convenience items are food products that do not contain artificial sweeteners, gluten, vegetable oils, food dyes, or any addition chemicals or preservatives. They make great additions to a real food diet to help make cooking (and life!) easier. Examples include brands like Primal Kitchen and Simple Mills.*

	Whole Foods	Red Clover	HyVee	Natural Grocers
Produce Selection	A	C	B	B
Produce Quality	A	A	B	A
Organic Selection	B	A	D	A
Meat Selection	B	C	A	C
Meat Quality	A	B	B	A
Real Food Convenience Items	A	A	A	A
Pre-cut Vegetables	A	F	C	D
Overall Price per Quality	C	B	D	B



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	Trader Joe's	Super Saver	Costco	Walmart
Produce Selection	A	B	B	A
Produce Quality	A	C	B	B
Organic Selection	A	D	B	B
Meat Selection	B	A	A	A
Meat Quality	B	C	B	B
Real Food Convenience Items	D	F	B	C
Pre-cut Vegetables	A	C	B	C
Overall Price per Quality	A	B	A	B

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	Sam's Club	Russ's Market	Aldi	Open Harvest
Produce Selection	B	A	B	B
Produce Quality	B	B	B	A
Organic Selection	C	D	B	A
Meat Selection	A	A	B	C
Meat Quality	B	B	B	A
Real Food Convenience Items	D	C	C	A
Pre-cut Vegetables	B	B	C	D
Overall Price per Quality	A	B	A	B



GROCERY STORE REVIEWS

Now that each store has been rated and reviewed, where to shop?! Here is a simple review of each store to help streamline your shopping process.

Whole Foods

While Whole Foods has a great selection of produce, organic produce, meat, and real food convenience items, you can get all of that and more at other stores for a better price. I recommend shopping there infrequently as needed for specific items not found elsewhere.

Red Clover

Local to Lincoln, NE, this store has a good selection of real-food convenience items. It also has a decent selection of meat, albeit frozen. The prices are good when items are on sale, but otherwise can be a bit pricey (about the same as Whole Foods). Overall, they are a great stop if you need a quick snack or want to find a new product to try!

HyVee

HyVee has a great selection of everything - produce, meat, real food convenience products in their health market, etc, but the prices are up to \$5 more than other stores. It can be a good option for a one-stop store, but not necessarily with the best prices.

GROCERY STORE REVIEWS

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Natural Grocers

While this store has only organic produce and a smaller meat selection, most specialty items and real food convenience foods are significantly cheaper than other stores, sometimes up to \$5 cheaper. I typically recommend this as a great addition to a store like Fresh Thyme.

Trader Joe's

Trader Joe's has a great selection of produce, especially pre-cut vegetables, and meat, but their "fun" convenience foods leave much to be desired. My advice - stick to the edge of the store and watch for hidden canola, soy, rice bran, sunflower seed, and vegetable oils as well as sugar! (See also the cooking fats video and PDF in this module).

Super Saver

Super Saver has good prices on produce with a poor organic selection. The meat selection is decent, while the quality is acceptable. There are very few, if any, real food convenience food items available, so if those are on your list, another store like Natural Grocers might be added.

GROCERY STORE REVIEWS

Now that each store has been rated and reviewed, where to shop?! Here is a simple review of each store to help streamline your shopping process.

Costco

Costco has a decent selection of vegetables and fruit, but depending on the time of the year, stores like Fresh Thyme often have better prices on produce. The meat selection is good, along with the organic options in the meat and produce department. The real food convenience items are hit and miss, but they do have decent options. Watch for added vegetable oils and sugar.

Walmart

Walmart has a huge selection of produce and meat, so it should always have what you need. Quality can depend on the item. Real food convenience foods are often lacking, as many of the brands sold at Walmart are the typical Lay's or Oscar Mayer and not the real food brands I trust.

Sam's Club

Sam's Club has a similar selection of produce and meat compared to Costco with fewer organic options. The real food convenience foods do not compare to Costco, and I wouldn't recommend seeking them out there. Watch out for extra additives - even spices at Sam's Club can have extra sugar or vegetable oils added!

GROCERY STORE REVIEWS

Now that each store has been rated and reviewed, where to shop?! Here is a simple review of each store to help streamline your shopping process.

Russ's Market

Russ's has a good selection of produce and meat, but not many organic options. Their real food convenience items are interesting – there aren't a ton of options, but the options that are there are decent (albeit random). Prices are respectable, but not the lowest.

Aldi

Aldi has a decent selection of produce and meat, but watch expirations carefully. The produce can go bad quickly. Their real food convenience items can typically stay out of your cart as they have gluten, sugar, or vegetable oils added. However, some of their organic items (even baking items like almond flour) can be good choices, especially considering the good prices.

Open Harvest

Open Harvest has a great selection of organic produce, a small selection of meat, and a decent selection of real food convenience products. Their prices are just a bit higher than Natural Grocers, but their CSA program and use of local items is well worth supporting.

HOW TO DICE & SLICE

Making the most of your time in the kitchen helps save you the meal time-crunch struggle. Use these tips to help dice, chop, and slice more efficiently and effectively.

See the How to Dice & Slice video from Module 1 for examples.

How to Dice:

Dicing doesn't have to be an exact science, so do not expect perfection! To dice vegetables such as an onion, zucchini, carrots, or potatoes, I recommend the following steps:

1. Cut the vegetable in half (or quarters) length-wise (for an onion in line with the rings)
2. With the cut side down, cut strips down the length of the vegetable (if needed for larger vegetables)
3. Then cut width-wise along the strips to easily form the size of dices that you need

How to Slice:

Like dicing, do not expect perfection in slicing vegetables. To slice vegetables such as peppers, zucchini, carrots, or onions, I recommend these steps:

1. Cut large vegetables in half length-wise and keep small vegetables whole
2. Slice width-wise into circles or half moons about 1/8" each
3. For an onion, cut in half against the rings, and place the cut side down; slice into half rings of desired size
4. For a pepper, I recommend cutting each side down rather than trying to take out the middle (however that is an option); lay the skin side down and cut into strips of desired size

COOKING FATS & OILS

Choosing the right cooking fats and oils is not only essential to your health, but also how your food cooks and tastes! Use this guide to help you while cleaning out your pantry and shopping.

See also the [Cooking Fats & Oils video from Module 1](#).

Choose:

Hot Uses:

- *Butter or Ghee (clarified butter)*
- *Coconut Oil, refined*
- *Lard, Tallow, or other animal fats*
- *Bacon Grease (ideally from a pasture raised source)*

Medium Heat Uses:

- *Avocado Oil (organic, cold-pressed)*
- *Olive Oil (organic, cold-pressed, extra virgin)*
- *Coconut Oil, unrefined*

Cold Uses (all organic, cold-pressed):

- *Flaxseed Oil*
- *Macadamia Nut Oil*
- *Sesame Oil*
- *Walnut Oil*

Avoid:

These fats are highly toxic to the body via the way they are made and used. They are common in most convenience foods and are almost always used in restaurants. Avoid as often as possible.

- *Vegetable Oils (canola, corn, soybean, cottonseed, safflower, sunflower, rice bran, peanut, grapeseed, vegetable oil blends, etc)*
- *Margarine ("Lite" butter spreads, yogurt butter blends, cooking sprays, spray butter, etc)*
- *Shortening (made from vegetable oils)*
- *Trans Fats (denoted as "partially hydrogenated oils" on ingredient lists)*

COOKING 101

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**Make cooking healthy food simple, easy, and tasty with
Cooking 101!**

How It Works:

- 8 week online course
- PDFs, recipes, video introductions & demonstrations, handouts, and more!
- Unlimited access to the course
- Self-paced course

Topics Covered:

- How to build your meals in a healthy format
- How to dice and slice to save yourself time in the kitchen
- Using the slow cooker to make mealtime super simple
- Freezing slow cooker meals for use in the future
- How to roast vegetables perfectly
- Why the egg bake is one of the best breakfast options out there
- How to customize the egg bake to make everyone happy
- How to freeze an egg bake for eating later
- Using the Instant Pot to cut down on mealtime or prep work
- How to prepare meals in 30, 20, or 10 minutes using the skillet
- How casseroles can be tasty (even without pasta or a sauce)
- How to plan and prep food for a week
- Tips for meal planning and prepping
- Grocery lists and templates for meal planning
- And more!

Sign Up:

- Starts on your time! Completely online, so you determine when you learn.
- \$129
- Sign up or questions - oborer@synergylincoln.com

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