

COOKING SKILLS

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

8 Chapters

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Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 1 · Stock Basics

SKILL GOAL

Make a clear, flavoursome stock by simmering gently, skimming and cooling it safely.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Stock is flavoured water. Bones or vegetables give up their flavour into **cold water** over time, and a good stock is the base of almost every soup, sauce, stew and risotto. Start in cold water so the flavour dissolves slowly and the proteins rise as scum you can lift off; heat it slowly to a **bare simmer** (small bubbles breaking now and then); and never let it boil hard, which makes it cloudy and greasy.

Don't add salt: stock gets reduced and seasoned later, and a salty stock cannot be rescued. Use cheap vegetables, trimmings and bones, strain it, and cool it fast, because stock goes off quickly (see the safety box). A vegetable stock needs about 45 minutes, chicken 2 to 3 hours, and ham 2 hours. Cooking Skills: Vegetables 1, chapter 6 used stock in a first soup; here you make the stock itself. For the sauces that use stock see Cooking Skills: Sauces 2, chapter 1.

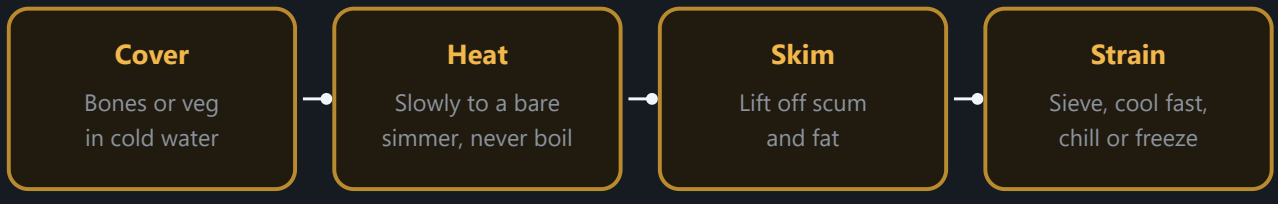


Figure 1. Cover, heat, skim, strain: the four steps of every stock.

The method

- **Start in cold water,** with just enough to cover the ingredients by about 3 cm.

- **Bring slowly to a bare simmer,** then turn the heat low so only a few bubbles break the surface.
- **Skim the scum** (grey foam) in the first 20 minutes with a spoon, and the fat at the end.
- **Leave it unsalted,** and don't stir it, which clouds it.
- **Strain, cool in shallow containers within an hour or two,** then chill or freeze in portions.

STOCK	MAIN INGREDIENTS	TIME (APPROXIMATE)	KEEPS
Vegetable	Onion, carrot, celery, leek	45 minutes	2 days chilled, 3 months frozen
Upgraded cube	Low-salt cube plus trimmings	20 minutes	2 days chilled
Chicken	Carcass, onion, carrot, celery	2 to 3 hours	2 days chilled, 3 months frozen
Ham	Ham hock, onion, carrot	2 hours	2 days chilled, 3 months frozen

HOT POT, STOCK SAFETY AND ALLERGENS

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Bones in stock: strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never give them to dogs.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Vegetable stock

1 hour | about 1.5 litres | a clear stock from trimmings

The simplest stock and the best place to start. Use whatever is in the vegetable drawer, but avoid strong brassicas (cabbage, broccoli) and beetroot, which dominate or colour it. Leave the onion skin on for a golden colour.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 1.5 LITRES)

2	onions, quartered, skin on
2	carrots, roughly chopped
2	celery sticks, roughly chopped
1	leek, roughly chopped
4	garlic cloves, crushed
2	bay leaves
6	parsley stalks
8	black peppercorns
2 litres	cold water

1. Put everything in a large pan with the cold water and bring slowly to a simmer.
2. Simmer very gently, uncovered, for **40 to 45 minutes,** skimming off any foam.
3. Strain through a fine sieve, press the vegetables lightly, cool in shallow containers and chill or freeze in portions.

HOT POT AND STORAGE

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

> **Allergens in soup and stock:** celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 1 · CHEAT

An upgraded stock cube

25 minutes | about 500 ml | adding body to a cube

A cube is a salty shortcut, but 20 minutes with a few vegetable trimmings makes it taste like a stock. Make the cube up weaker than the pack says, and taste before you add salt to anything it goes into.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 500 ML)

1	low-salt stock cube (chicken or vegetable)
600 ml	water
1	carrot, chopped
1	celery stick, chopped
1	onion, halved, skin on
1	bay leaf
4	parsley stalks
4	black peppercorns

1. Crumble the cube into the water, add the vegetables, bay leaf, parsley and peppercorns, and bring to a simmer.
2. Simmer gently for **20 minutes,** then taste and add more water if it is still salty.
3. Strain and use at once, or cool and chill for up to 2 days.

SALT AND ALLERGENS

Stock and salt: stock cubes and bought stocks are very salty. Use low-salt cubes, make them up weaker than the pack says, and do not salt a stock at all: it will be reduced or seasoned later, and a salty stock cannot be fixed.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the

> handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

LEVEL 2 · CHICKEN

Chicken stock from a carcass

3 hours | about 2 litres | skimming and simmering bones for body

After a roast chicken, never bin the carcass. Break it up and simmer it with vegetables for a rich stock that sets to a jelly when cold, which is the sign of a good one. Strain it carefully, because bones break up in long simmering.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 2 LITRES)

1	chicken carcass (cooked or raw), broken up
1	onion, halved, skin on
2	carrots, chopped
2	celery sticks, chopped
2	bay leaves
4	sprigs thyme
8	black peppercorns
3 litres	cold water

1. Put the carcass, vegetables and herbs in a large pan, cover with the cold water and bring slowly to a simmer, skimming the scum for the first 20 minutes.
2. Simmer very gently, partly covered, for **2 to 3 hours.** Do not let it boil.
3. Strain through a fine sieve, cool quickly, chill, and lift the set fat off the top before using or freezing.

RAW CHICKEN, BONES AND STORAGE

Raw chicken and carcasses: keep raw chicken and carcasses on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, never rinse raw chicken under the tap (it splashes bacteria around) and cook stock bones thoroughly.

Bones in stock: strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never give them to dogs.

> **Hot pot and hot steam:** a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.
>
> **Cooling and keeping stock:** stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

LEVEL 3 · HAM

A ham stock from a hock

2 hours 30 minutes plus soaking | about 2 litres | taming a salty ingredient

An unsmoked ham hock makes a deeply savoury stock, but it is salty. Soak it overnight, boil it for 10 minutes and tip that water away before starting the stock proper. The meat is lifted off and kept for the split pea and ham soup in Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 5.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 2 LITRES)

1	unsmoked ham hock (about 1 kg), soaked overnight in cold water
1	onion, halved, skin on
2	carrots, chopped
2	bay leaves
8	black peppercorns
2.5 litres	cold water

1. Drain the hock, cover with fresh cold water, boil for **10 minutes,** then drain and rinse. This removes most of the salt.
2. Put the hock back with the vegetables, bay, peppercorns and the 2.5 litres of fresh cold water. Bring to a simmer and cook gently for **2 hours,** skimming.
3. Lift out the hock, strain the stock, cool and chill. Shred the meat when cool enough and keep it for soup.

SALT, HOT POT AND STORAGE

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Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2

> days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.
>
> **Bones in stock:** strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never give them to dogs.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Cold or hot water start

Clarity.

1. Make two small stocks, one starting in cold water and one in hot.

Look for: The cold start gives a clearer stock; the hot start sets the surface proteins at once and gives a cloudier result with less flavour.

EXPERIMENT

Simmering or boiling

Appearance.

1. Cook two pots of the same stock, one at a bare simmer and one at a hard boil, for the same time.

Look for: The boiled stock is cloudy and greasy; the gently simmered one is clear and clean-tasting.

EXPERIMENT

Salted or unsalted

Control.

1. Salt one half of a small stock at the start, and reduce both by half.

Look for: The salted one becomes far too salty when reduced; the unsalted one can be seasoned to taste.

EXPERIMENT

1 hour or 3 hours

Depth.

1. Taste a chicken stock at 1 hour and again at 3 hours.

Look for: At 1 hour it is thin and light; at 3 hours it is rounder, richer and sets to a jelly when cold.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Vegetable stock				
Upgraded stock cube				
Chicken stock				
Ham stock				
Cold or hot water start				
Simmering or boiling				
Salted or unsalted				
1 hour or 3 hours				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Cloudy stock	Boiled hard or stirred	Simmer gently and don't stir; strain through a cloth
Weak, watery stock	Too much water or too short	Use less water and simmer longer, or reduce it
Greasy stock	Fat not skimmed	Chill and lift off the set fat
Bitter stock	Strong brassicas or burnt vegetables	Leave out cabbage and broccoli; keep the simmer gentle
Too salty	Salted at the start or a salty cube	Don't salt; use low-salt cubes and water it down
Stock smells sour	Cooled too slowly	Throw it away; next time cool in shallow containers

STOCK SAFETY, STORAGE AND ALLERGENS

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Stock and salt: stock cubes and bought stocks are very salty. Use low-salt cubes, make them up weaker than the pack says, and do not salt a stock at all: it will be reduced or seasoned later, and a salty stock cannot be fixed.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I start a stock in cold water.
- ☐ I can keep a stock at a bare simmer.
- ☐ I can skim scum and fat.
- ☐ I can cool and store stock safely.
- ☐ I know why I don't salt a stock.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 2 is Brown, Fish and Other Stocks: roasting for colour and making short stocks.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 2 · Brown, Fish and Other Stocks

SKILL GOAL

Roast for colour, make a short fish stock, and concentrate and freeze stock so it is always to hand.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Different stocks suit different jobs. A **brown stock** uses roasted bones and vegetables for a deep colour and a savoury, almost meaty taste, and takes about 4 hours. A **fish stock** is the opposite: only 20 to 25 minutes, because fish bones turn bitter and cloudy if cooked longer. A **mushroom stock** is a fast vegetarian stock with a rich, earthy flavour. No alcohol is used: roasting and a spoon of tomato paste give the depth that wine would.

Concentrating stock is the cook's trick for storage. Simmer a stock down to a quarter of its volume and freeze it in ice-cube trays, and you have home-made 'cubes' with no salt or additives, to dilute with water. Use brown stock for the sauces in Cooking Skills: Sauces 2, chapter 1, and fish stock for the stews in Cooking Skills: Fish and Shellfish 2, chapter 3. The fish stock recipe here is the same as the one in Cooking Skills: Fish and Shellfish 2, chapter 2, shortened to the essentials.

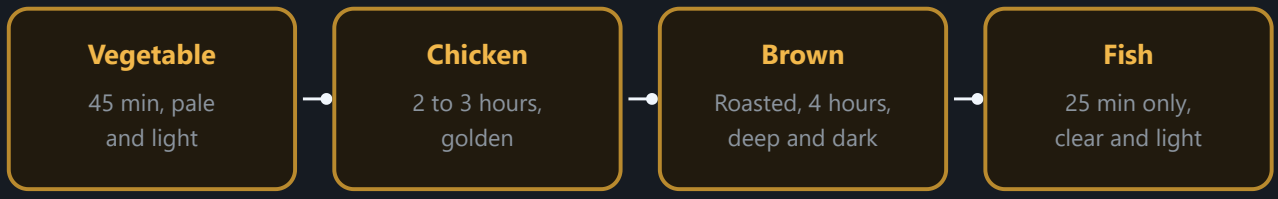


Figure 2. Four stocks by time and colour: pale and fast, or dark and slow.

The method

- **Roast bones and vegetables** at 220°C (200°C fan, gas 7) until deep brown, but not burnt, which makes the stock bitter.
- **Add a spoon of tomato paste** to the tray for the last 10 minutes to deepen the colour and flavour.
- **Deglaze the tray with hot water,** scraping up the brown bits (they are flavour), and add them to the pot.
- **Keep fish stock short,** 20 to 25 minutes, and use only white fish bones.
- **Reduce to concentrate,** then freeze in ice-cube trays and bag them up, labelled.

STOCK	METHOD	TIME (APPROXIMATE)	BEST FOR
Brown beef	Roast first, then simmer	4 hours	Gravy, onion soup, beef and barley soup
Fish	No roasting, simmer only	25 minutes	Fish stews, chowders, seafood soups
Mushroom	Simmer with dried mushrooms	30 minutes	Vegetarian soups and risotto
Concentrated	Reduce by half to three quarters	30 to 60 minutes more	Storage in ice-cube trays

HOT OVEN, HOT POT, STOCK SAFETY AND ALLERGENS

Hot pan and hot oil: roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock

cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Mushroom stock

40 minutes | about 1 litre | a fast, rich vegetarian stock

Dried porcini give a deep, meaty taste, and fresh mushroom trimmings add more. Soak the porcini first, keep the soaking liquid (strain it, because it is gritty) and add it to the pot.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 1 LITRE)

20 g	dried porcini mushrooms
250 g	chestnut mushrooms or trimmings, sliced
1	onion, halved, skin on
1	carrot, chopped
1	celery stick, chopped
2	bay leaves
6	black peppercorns
1.2 litres	cold water

1. Soak the porcini in 300 ml hot water for 20 minutes, lift them out and strain the liquid through a fine sieve or coffee filter.
2. Put all the ingredients and the strained soaking liquid in a pan with the remaining water. Bring to a simmer.
3. Simmer gently for **30 minutes,** strain, cool and chill.

HOT POT, STORAGE AND ALLERGENS

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Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and

> stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 2 · QUICK

A 25-minute fish stock

35 minutes | about 1 litre | a clear, short stock from white fish bones

Ask the fishmonger for white fish bones and heads (never oily fish, which makes it greasy and strong), rinse out the blood, and remove the gills, which turn it bitter. Fish stock must not simmer longer than 25 minutes.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 1 LITRE)

1 kg	white fish bones and heads (gills removed), chopped and rinsed
1	onion, sliced
1	celery stick, sliced
1	leek, sliced
1	bay leaf
6	parsley stalks
6	white peppercorns
1.5 litres	cold water
2	lemon slices

1. Put everything in a large pan and bring slowly to a simmer. Skim the scum.
2. Simmer gently for **20 to 25 minutes** only.
3. Strain through a fine sieve, cool quickly in an ice bath, chill and use within 1 day, or freeze.

FISH BONES, HOT POT AND STORAGE

Bones in stock: strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never give them to dogs.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

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Allergens: contains fish.

LEVEL 3 · BROWN

Brown beef stock

5 hours | about 2 litres | roasting for colour and simmering long

The deepest stock. Roast the bones until they are dark brown, add the vegetables and tomato paste, deglaze the tray, and simmer for 4 hours. It sets firmly when cold. Keep the heat low so it stays clear, and strain well.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 2 LITRES)

1.5 kg	beef bones (knuckle, marrow or shin on the bone)
2	onions, quartered, skin on
2	carrots, chopped
2	celery sticks, chopped
2 tbsp	tomato paste
2	bay leaves
4	sprigs thyme
8	black peppercorns
3 litres	cold water

1. Roast the bones and vegetables in a tray at 220°C (200°C fan, gas 7) for **40 to 45 minutes,** turning once, until deep brown. Smear with the tomato paste and roast for 10 minutes more.
2. Tip everything into a pan, deglaze the tray with a little hot water and add it, then add the herbs, peppercorns and cold water. Bring slowly to a simmer and skim.
3. Simmer very gently, partly covered, for **4 hours.** Strain, cool fast, chill and lift off the fat.

> **HOT OVEN, HOT POT, RAW BEEF AND STORAGE**
>
> **Hot pan and hot oil:** roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.
>
> **Hot pot and hot steam:** a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep

children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Raw beef: keep raw beef bones on their own board and wash hands and tools afterwards.

LEVEL 3 · CONCENTRATE

Reducing and freezing stock cubes

1 hour plus freezing | about 24 cubes | concentrating stock for storage

Take a strained chicken, brown or vegetable stock and boil it down to a quarter of the volume, then freeze it in ice-cube trays. Each cube makes about 100 ml of stock when diluted with water. It tastes better than a shop cube, and has no added salt.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 24 CUBES)

2 litres	strained chicken, brown or vegetable stock
2	ice cube trays
1	freezer bag
1	permanent marker

1. Pour the stock into a wide pan and simmer, uncovered, for **45 to 60 minutes** until reduced to about 500 ml, skimming now and then.
2. Cool in an ice bath, then pour into ice cube trays and freeze for 3 hours.
3. Pop the cubes into a labelled freezer bag, dated. Use within 3 months. Dilute 1 cube to about 4 parts water, then season.

HOT POT, FREEZING AND STORAGE

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Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Freezing: label the bag with the type and date, and use within about 3 months (general guidance). Defrost in a pan over a gentle heat or in the fridge, and boil until steaming hot.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Roasted or pale bones

Colour and flavour.

1. Make two small stocks from the same bones, one roasted dark and one simply simmered.

Look for: The roasted one is dark and savoury; the unroasted one is pale and thin.

EXPERIMENT

Tomato paste or none

Depth.

1. Roast one tray with tomato paste and one without.

Look for: The tomato paste adds colour, sweetness and a gentle acidity; the plain tray is flatter.

EXPERIMENT

Skimmed or not

Clarity.

1. Skim one pot for the first 20 minutes and leave another untouched.

Look for: The skimmed stock is clear and clean-tasting; the unskimmed one is cloudy with grey foam mixed in.

EXPERIMENT

Reduced by half or three quarters

Strength.

1. Reduce two portions of the same stock, one by half and one by three quarters, and taste each diluted.

Look for: The three-quarters reduction makes more portions per cube and has a richer flavour, but it is easier to over-salt, so season last.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Mushroom stock				
Fish stock				
Brown beef stock				
Stock cubes				
Roasted or pale bones				
Tomato paste or none				
Skimmed or not				
Reduced by half or three quarters				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Bitter brown stock	Bones or vegetables burnt	Roast to deep brown, not black; add the paste late
Cloudy fish stock	Boiled or simmered too long	Keep to 25 minutes and a gentle heat

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Bitter fish stock	Gills left in or too long	Remove the gills; stop at 25 minutes
Stock won't set	Too much water or too few bones	Use less water or reduce it; add a trotter next time
Freezer cubes taste stale	Stored too long or uncovered	Bag them tightly; use within 3 months
Mushroom stock gritty	Soaking liquid not strained	Strain through a coffee filter

HOT OVEN, STOCK SAFETY AND FREEZING

Hot pan and hot oil: roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can roast bones for a brown stock.
- ☐ I can make a fish stock without making it bitter.
- ☐ I can make a stock from mushrooms.
- ☐ I can reduce stock and freeze it as cubes.
- ☐ I know which stock suits which dish.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 3 is Clear Soups and Broths: keeping a soup clear and building flavour in layers.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 3 · Clear Soups and Broths

SKILL GOAL

Keep a broth clear and build its flavour in layers, then season it right at the end.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A broth is a soup you could almost drink, with a clear liquid and pieces of vegetable, meat or grain floating in it. It is the best test of your stock, because there is nowhere to hide: a good stock makes a good broth. Build it in layers: **stock** first, **vegetables** cut small and evenly so they cook together, **protein** poached gently and shredded or sliced, and a **finish** of salt, lemon and fresh herbs at the very end.

Keep it clear: simmer, don't boil; don't stir much; and skim. Add salt only at the end, because the liquid reduces. Barley and rice thicken a broth as they cook, so cook them separately if you want it really clear. Noodle soups have their own courses: see Cooking Skills: Noodles 1, chapter 3. The stocks come from chapters 1 and 2 of this course.

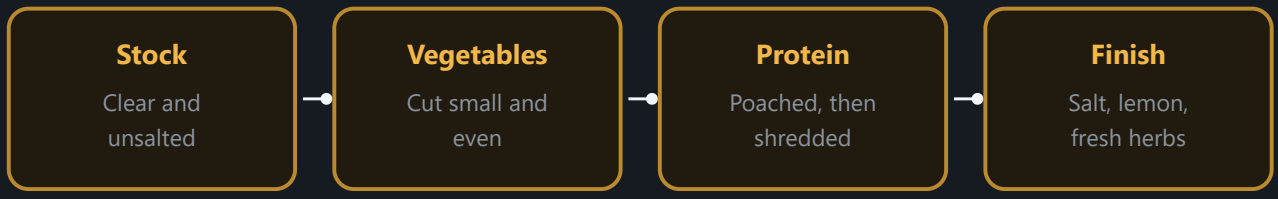


Figure 3. Stock, vegetables, protein, finish: the layers of a broth.

The method

- **Use a good, unsalted stock,** homemade or low-salt, and keep it at a bare simmer.
- **Cut the vegetables small and even,** about 1 cm, so they cook together and look neat.

- **Poach the meat gently,** then lift it out, shred or slice it and return it at the end.
- **Skim as you go,** and don't stir, which clouds the broth.
- **Season at the end** with salt, a squeeze of lemon and fresh herbs.

SOUP	BASE	MAIN EXTRAS	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Chicken and vegetable broth	Chicken stock	Chicken thighs, carrot, celery, leek	40 minutes
Scotch broth	Lamb and water	Pearl barley, swede, carrot	2 hours
Beef and barley soup	Brown stock	Beef shin, barley, root vegetables	2 hours 30 minutes
Egg-drop soup	Chicken stock	Egg, ginger, spring onion	15 minutes

HOT POT, RAW MEAT AND ALLERGENS

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Raw chicken and carcasses: keep raw chicken and carcasses on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, never rinse raw chicken under the tap (it splashes bacteria around) and cook stock bones thoroughly.

Raw meat: keep raw beef and lamb on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook the meat through.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Chicken and vegetable broth

50 minutes | 4 portions | poaching chicken in stock and keeping a broth clear

The classic. Poach two chicken thighs in the stock until just cooked, lift them out to shred, and cook small cut vegetables in the same stock. Add the chicken back at the end with parsley and a squeeze of lemon. Perfect for a cold.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1.2 litres	chicken stock (chapter 1), unsalted
2	chicken thighs, skinless and boneless
1	carrot, diced
1	celery stick, diced
1	leek, sliced
1	bay leaf
2 tbsp	chopped parsley
½	lemon, juice
1 pinch	flaked sea salt

1. Bring the stock and bay leaf to a gentle simmer, add the thighs and poach for **15 to 20 minutes** until cooked through (no pink, juices clear). Lift out and shred.
2. Add the carrot, celery and leek and simmer for **10 minutes** until tender.
3. Return the chicken, season with salt and lemon, and add the parsley.

RAW CHICKEN, HOT POT AND ALLERGENS

Raw chicken and carcasses: keep raw chicken and carcasses on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, never rinse raw chicken under the tap (it splashes bacteria around) and cook stock bones thoroughly.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Sharp knives: a sharp knife is safer than a blunt one because it needs less force. Cut away from your body, steady the board with a damp cloth under it, curl your fingertips on the food you are holding and put the knife down flat when you are talking.

LEVEL 2 · QUICK

Egg-drop soup

15 minutes | 2 portions | swirling egg into a hot broth

A Chinese-style soup in 10 minutes. Simmer the stock with ginger, thicken it slightly with cornflour so the egg forms silky ribbons, and pour the egg in a thin stream while stirring gently in one direction.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

600 ml	chicken stock, unsalted
1 tbsp	soy sauce
2	slices of fresh ginger
1 tbsp	cornflour, mixed with 2 tbsp cold water
2	eggs, beaten
2	spring onions, finely sliced
1 pinch	white pepper

1. Simmer the stock, soy sauce and ginger for **5 minutes.** Lift out the ginger.
2. Stir the cornflour mix and add it, stirring, until the broth is slightly thickened and clear.
3. Pour in the beaten egg in a thin stream while stirring slowly. Stir for 30 seconds, add spring onions and pepper, and serve.

RAW EGG, HOT POT AND ALLERGENS

Eggs in soup: egg-drop soup cooks the egg in a hot broth. Use fresh eggs, wash your hands after cracking them, and make sure the broth is simmering so the egg sets. Young children, pregnant women and the elderly should have the egg fully set, not wispy and raw.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

> **Allergens:** contains egg, soya and often celery and gluten (stock and soy sauce).

LEVEL 2 · HEARTY

Scotch broth

2 hours 15 minutes | 6 portions | simmering a meat and barley broth

A thick Scottish broth that is almost a stew: lamb on the bone, pearl barley and root vegetables, cooked in plain water so the meat flavours the liquid. Skim well, and add the barley and vegetables in stages.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

600 g	lamb neck or shoulder on the bone
2 litres	cold water
80 g	pearl barley, rinsed
1	onion, diced
2	carrots, diced
150 g	swede or turnip, diced
1	leek, sliced
2	bay leaves
3 tbsp	chopped parsley

1. Put the lamb and cold water in a pan, bring slowly to a simmer and skim for the first 15 minutes. Add the barley and bay and simmer for **1 hour.**
2. Add the onion, carrot, swede and leek and simmer for **45 minutes more.** Lift out the lamb, remove the bones and fat, and shred the meat.
3. Return the meat, season carefully, and stir in the parsley.

RAW MEAT, BARLEY AND HOT POT

Raw meat: keep raw beef and lamb on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook the meat through.

Barley and gluten: pearl barley contains gluten and swells a lot, so a soup can turn into a stew if left. Add a little water when reheating, and use rice or buckwheat for a gluten-free soup.

> **Hot pot and hot steam:** a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.
>
> **Bones in stock:** strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never give them to dogs.

LEVEL 3 · BROWN

Beef and barley soup

2 hours 45 minutes | 6 portions | a long-simmered beef broth with a clear finish

Use the brown stock from chapter 2 and a piece of shin. Cook the beef until it falls apart, then add the barley and vegetables so they stay distinct. The tomato paste gives colour. It tastes better the next day.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

1.5 litres	brown beef stock (chapter 2), unsalted
400 g	beef shin or chuck, cut into 2 cm pieces
1 tbsp	rapeseed oil
1 tbsp	tomato paste
80 g	pearl barley, rinsed
1	onion, diced
2	carrots, diced
1	celery stick, diced
2	parsnips, diced
1	bay leaf

1. Brown the beef in the hot oil in batches, then add the tomato paste, stock and bay leaf. Simmer gently for **1 hour 30 minutes** until the beef is nearly tender.
2. Add the barley and vegetables and simmer for **45 minutes more** until the barley is tender and the beef falls apart.
3. Season at the end, and add water if it has thickened too much.

HOT PAN, RAW BEEF, BARLEY AND HOT POT

Hot pan and hot oil: roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Raw meat: keep raw beef and lamb on their own board and plate, away from food that won't

be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook the meat through.

Barley and gluten: pearl barley contains gluten and swells a lot, so a soup can turn into a stew if left. Add a little water when reheating, and use rice or buckwheat for a gluten-free soup.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Vegetables cut small or large

Cooking time.

1. Cook two small pots of broth, one with 1 cm dice and one with 3 cm chunks, for the same time.

Look for: The small pieces cook evenly and look neat; the large ones are still hard in the middle.

EXPERIMENT

Barley soaked or not

Texture.

1. Soak one spoon of barley for 2 hours and leave another dry, and simmer both for 45 minutes.

Look for: The soaked barley is softer and cooks faster; the dry barley takes longer and absorbs more of the broth.

EXPERIMENT

Broth salted early or late

Control.

1. Salt one broth at the start and another at the end of the same simmer.

Look for: The early-salted one concentrates and can become too salty; the late-salted one is easy to adjust.

EXPERIMENT

A strained or rustic broth

Appearance.

1. Strain half a pot of broth through a fine sieve and leave the other half as it is.

Look for: The strained broth is clear and elegant; the rustic one is cloudier but more filling.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Chicken and vegetable broth				
Egg-drop soup				
Scotch broth				
Beef and barley soup				
Vegetables cut small or large				
Barley soaked or not				
Broth salted early or late				
A strained or rustic broth				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Cloudy broth	Boiled hard or stirred	Simmer gently; strain through a cloth
Bland broth	Weak stock or not enough salt	Reduce, or season at the end with salt and lemon
Tough meat	Cooked too fast	Simmer very gently for longer
Thick, stew-like soup	Barley or rice swelled	Add hot stock or water and re-season
Rubbery egg	Broth boiling when added	Add the egg to a gentle simmer
Greasy surface	Fat not skimmed	Chill and lift off the fat, or blot with kitchen paper

HOT POT, LEFTOVERS AND ALLERGENS

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can keep a broth clear.
- ☐ I can build a broth in layers.
- ☐ I can poach chicken in stock.
- ☐ I can cook barley without it thickening the soup too much.
- ☐ I season a broth at the end.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 4 is Blended Soups: sweating, simmering, blending and seasoning smooth soups.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 4 · Blended Soups

SKILL GOAL

Sweat, simmer, blend and season so every smooth soup tastes of its main ingredient.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A blended soup follows one method: **sweat** an onion slowly in oil or butter with a lid on until it is soft and sweet, add the main **vegetable and stock,** and **simmer** until tender. Then **blend** until smooth and **season** at the end. What changes from soup to soup is the vegetable and the finish. A potato added to a thin soup thickens it; a splash of cream makes it velvety; a squeeze of lemon makes it taste brighter.

Roasting the main vegetable first (tomatoes, peppers, cauliflower) gives a sweeter, deeper flavour than boiling it, and no wine is used here. Cooking Skills: Vegetables 1, chapter 6 made a first tomato soup and green soup; here the soups are different and the method is more careful. Hot blending is a real hazard: read the safety box before you start.

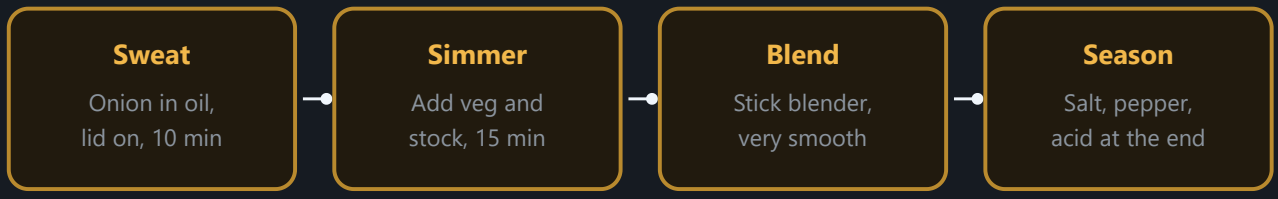


Figure 4. Sweat, simmer, blend, season: the method for every blended soup.

The method

- **Sweat the onion** in oil with a lid on, low heat, for 8 to 10 minutes. It should be soft and not browned.

- **Add the main vegetable, stock and a potato (if thin),** and simmer until all is soft.
- **Blend carefully,** using a stick blender in the pan or a half-full jug with a vented lid.
- **Adjust the thickness** with hot stock or water, and season at the end.
- **Finish with acid and fresh herbs,** or a spoon of cream, to lift the flavour.

SOUP	MAIN VEGETABLE	THICKENER	FINISH
Roasted tomato and red pepper	Tomatoes, peppers	A slice of bread or potato	Basil, a swirl of yogurt
Pea and mint	Frozen peas	Potato	Mint, lemon
Cauliflower	Roasted cauliflower	Potato	Nutmeg, a little cream
Cream of mushroom	Chestnut mushrooms	Flour or potato	Cream, thyme, lemon

HOT BLENDING, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Hot pan and hot oil: roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Hot milk and cream: milk and cream boil over in seconds and burn worse than water. Keep the heat low, stay at the pan, and add dairy at the end. Never boil a soup once it has cream, or it may split.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Pea and mint soup

30 minutes | 4 portions | a fast green soup that stays bright

The quickest blended soup, and it keeps its colour because the peas cook for only a few minutes. A potato gives body without cream. Add the mint at the end, because heat turns it dull.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1 tbsp	rapeseed oil
1	onion, chopped
1	potato (about 200 g), peeled and diced
700 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
500 g	frozen peas
15 g	fresh mint leaves
1	lemon, juice
3 tbsp	plain yogurt, to serve

1. Sweat the onion in the oil with the lid on for **8 minutes.** Add the potato and stock and simmer for **10 minutes** until the potato is soft.
2. Add the peas and cook for **3 minutes** only. Take off the heat and add the mint.
3. Blend until smooth, season with salt, pepper and lemon, and serve with a spoon of yogurt.

HOT BLENDING AND ALLERGENS

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Allergens: contains celery (stock) and milk (yogurt).

LEVEL 2 · ROAST

Roasted tomato and red pepper soup

1 hour | 4 portions | roasting vegetables for sweetness

Roasting the tomatoes, peppers and garlic concentrates their sugar and gives a deep, sweet, smoky soup. A slice of bread thickens it and avoids cream. This is different from the plain tomato soup in Cooking Skills: Vegetables 1, chapter 6.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

800 g	ripe tomatoes, halved
2	red peppers, deseeded and quartered
1	onion, quartered
4	garlic cloves, in their skins
3 tbsp	rapeseed oil
500 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
1	slice of bread, torn
1 tsp	sugar
1 tbsp	red wine vinegar

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Toss the tomatoes, peppers, onion and garlic with the oil, season, and roast for **35 to 40 minutes** until soft and starting to blacken at the edges.
2. Squeeze the garlic from its skins. Tip everything into a pan with the stock and bread and simmer for **10 minutes.**
3. Blend until smooth, add the sugar and vinegar, taste and season.

> **HOT OVEN, HOT BLENDING AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot pan and hot oil:** roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.
>
> **Blending hot soup:** hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under

the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Allergens: contains celery and gluten (bread); sulphites (vinegar).

LEVEL 2 · ROAST

Cauliflower soup

1 hour | 4 portions | roasting for a nutty, creamy soup

Boiled cauliflower makes a bland soup; roasting turns it sweet and nutty. A potato gives creaminess and a splash of milk or cream smooths it. A pinch of nutmeg helps. Cauliflower is also a good vegan soup if you use oil and plant milk.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	cauliflower (about 800 g), in florets
3 tbsp	rapeseed oil
1	onion, chopped
1	potato, diced
2	garlic cloves, sliced
800 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
100 ml	whole milk or plant milk
1 pinch	nutmeg

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Roast the florets with 2 tbsp oil and salt for **25 to 30 minutes** until golden at the edges.
2. Sweat the onion and garlic in the remaining oil for 8 minutes, add the potato, stock and cauliflower, and simmer for **15 minutes.**
3. Blend until very smooth, stir in the milk and nutmeg, warm gently (do not boil) and season.

HOT OVEN, HOT BLENDING, MILK AND ALLERGENS

Hot pan and hot oil: roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the

lowest speed.

Hot milk and cream: milk and cream boil over in seconds and burn worse than water. Keep the heat low, stay at the pan, and add dairy at the end. Never boil a soup once it has cream, or it may split.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 3 · CREAM

Cream of mushroom soup

50 minutes | 4 portions | browning mushrooms for depth

Brown the mushrooms hard in a hot pan, in batches, to drive off water and build flavour, then soften the onion with them. Blend half the soup and leave half chunky for texture, and finish with cream and a squeeze of lemon.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

500 g	chestnut mushrooms, sliced
2 tbsp	rapeseed oil
30 g	butter
1	onion, chopped
2	garlic cloves, sliced
1 tbsp	plain flour
700 ml	mushroom or vegetable stock, unsalted (chapter 2)
4	sprigs thyme
100 ml	double cream
1	lemon, juice

1. Fry the mushrooms in the oil in 2 or 3 batches over a high heat for **5 minutes each** until deep brown. Set a few aside for garnish.
2. Soften the onion and garlic in the butter for 8 minutes, stir in the flour, then add the stock and thyme. Add the mushrooms and simmer for **15 minutes.**
3. Remove the thyme, blend half the soup, mix it back in, stir in the cream and lemon, and top with the reserved mushrooms.

> **HOT PAN, HOT BLENDING, CREAM AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot pan and hot oil:** roasting tins and frying pans for browning are very hot and fat spits. Use dry oven gloves, pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Hot milk and cream: milk and cream boil over in seconds and burn worse than water. Keep the heat low, stay at the pan, and add dairy at the end. Never boil a soup once it has cream, or it may split.

Allergens: contains milk, gluten (flour) and celery (stock).

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Stock or water

Flavour.

1. Make two small pots of pea soup, one with stock and one with water.

Look for: Stock gives a fuller, savoury soup; water tastes thin and relies on the vegetable alone.

EXPERIMENT

Hot or cooled before blending

Texture and safety.

1. Blend one batch after 10 minutes of cooling with a stick blender and compare with a batch blended straight from the heat.

Look for: The textures are the same, but cooling a few minutes makes it much safer; never blend sealed and boiling.

EXPERIMENT

Roasted or boiled vegetables

Sweetness.

1. Cook two small pots of cauliflower soup, one from roasted cauliflower and one boiled.

Look for: The roasted one is nutty and sweet; the boiled one is plain and slightly sulphurous.

EXPERIMENT

A splash of acid at the end

Brightness.

1. Taste a bowl of tomato soup with and without a teaspoon of vinegar.

Look for: Acid lifts the flavour and makes the soup taste less flat; it is often what a bland soup is missing.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Pea and mint soup				
Roasted tomato and pepper soup				
Cauliflower soup				
Cream of mushroom soup				
Stock or water				
Hot or cooled before blending				
Roasted or boiled vegetables				
A splash of acid at the end				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soup tastes flat	Not enough salt or acid	Add salt and a squeeze of lemon or vinegar, a little at a time
Lumpy soup	Under-blended	Blend longer, or sieve for a very smooth finish
Too thick	Too much potato or reduced	Add hot stock or water
Too thin	Too much liquid	Simmer to reduce, or blend in a potato or bread
Dull green pea soup	Overcooked	Cook the peas for 3 minutes only
Curdled cream	Boiled after adding	Add cream off the heat and warm gently

HOT BLENDING, HOT POT AND LEFTOVERS

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can sweat an onion without browning it.
- ☐ I can blend hot soup safely.
- ☐ I can thicken a soup without flour.
- ☐ I can season a soup with salt and acid.
- ☐ I can roast vegetables for a sweeter soup.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 5 is Hearty Soups: lentils, beans and meat in thick, filling bowls.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 5 · Hearty Soups

SKILL GOAL

Build thick, filling soups from lentils, peas, beans and meat that make a whole meal in a bowl.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A hearty soup is the opposite of a clear broth: thick, filling and made to be eaten with a spoon and a piece of bread. Its secret is **pulses** (lentils, split peas, beans), which cook to a soft, thick mass and give body without cream. The method is the same as before: sweat a base, add the main ingredient and stock, simmer until soft, then adjust. Mash or blend a **third** of it for body and leave the rest chunky.

Pulses love salt and acid at the end: season too early and the skins stay tough, and the soup tastes flat without a squeeze of lemon or a splash of vinegar. The ham hock stock and shredded ham from Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 1 are used here, and the stocks from chapters 1 and 2 give the best result. A day in the fridge improves these soups, because the flavours settle.



Figure 5. Base, pulses, liquid, finish: the build of a hearty soup.

The method

- **Sweat the base slowly** for 10 minutes, with garlic and spices added at the end.
- **Rinse the pulses,** add them with the stock and bring to a simmer, skimming the foam.
- **Simmer until completely soft,** and don't add salt or acid until they are tender.
- **Mash or blend about a third** to thicken, and leave the rest whole.
- **Finish with acid,** fresh herbs and good oil, then taste and adjust the salt.

SOUP	PULSE OR MAIN	TIME (APPROXIMATE)	TEXTURE
Red lentil soup	Red lentils	30 minutes	Smooth, thick
Split pea and ham	Yellow split peas, ham	1 hour 15 minutes	Thick, with shreds of ham
Cabbage and bean soup	Cannellini beans, cabbage	50 minutes	Chunky, with bread
Cock-a-leekie	Chicken, leeks, rice or barley	1 hour	Brothy, with tender pieces

PULSES, THICK SOUP AND HOT POT

Pulses and beans: dried red kidney beans contain a toxin and must be soaked overnight and boiled hard for at least 10 minutes before simmering; tinned beans are already cooked. Lentils and split peas need no soaking. Rinse them first, check for small stones, and keep a lid on, because they foam and boil over.

Thick soups catch and spit: a thick soup sticks to the base of the pan and blobs and spits when it bubbles. Stir often, keep the heat low, use a pan with a heavy base and a long spoon, and keep your face back.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Red lentil soup

35 minutes | 4 portions | a thick soup from a pantry pulse

The fastest hearty soup, with no soaking and no blender needed. Red lentils collapse into a golden purée in 20 minutes. Cumin and turmeric add warmth, and lemon at the end lifts it. Naturally vegan if you use vegetable stock.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

2 tbsp	rapeseed oil
1	onion, chopped
1	carrot, diced
2	garlic cloves, sliced
1 tsp	ground cumin
½ tsp	turmeric
200 g	red lentils, rinsed
1 litres	vegetable stock, unsalted
1	lemon, juice
2 tbsp	chopped coriander or parsley

1. Sweat the onion and carrot in the oil for **8 minutes.** Add the garlic and spices for 1 minute.
2. Add the lentils and stock, bring to a simmer, skim the foam and cook for **20 minutes** until the lentils are soft and collapsing.
3. Mash roughly or blend half, then add the lemon juice, salt and herbs.

> **PULSES, THICK SOUP AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Pulses and beans:** dried red kidney beans contain a toxin and must be soaked overnight and boiled hard for at least 10 minutes before simmering; tinned beans are already cooked. Lentils and split peas need no soaking. Rinse them first, check for small stones, and keep a lid on, because they foam and boil over.

Thick soups catch and spit: a thick soup sticks to the base of the pan and blobs and spits when it bubbles. Stir often, keep the heat low, use a pan with a heavy base and a long spoon, and keep your face back.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 2 · HAM

Split pea and ham soup

1 hour 30 minutes | 6 portions | using ham stock and shredded ham

A British winter classic. Yellow split peas cook to a thick, creamy soup in the ham stock from chapter 1, with the shredded ham stirred in. Use the unsalted stock so the soup is not too salty, and taste before adding any salt.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

250 g	yellow split peas, rinsed
1.5 litres	ham hock stock (chapter 1), unsalted
1	onion, chopped
2	carrots, diced
1	celery stick, diced
2	bay leaves
150 g	shredded ham from the hock
1 tbsp	rapeseed oil
2 tbsp	chopped parsley

1. Sweat the onion, carrot and celery in the oil for **8 minutes.** Add the split peas, bay and stock, bring to a simmer and skim.
2. Simmer, partly covered, for **1 hour** until the peas collapse, stirring now and then so they don't catch.
3. Stir in the ham and parsley, mash some of the peas for body, then taste and season.

> PULSES, HAM SALT, THICK SOUP
>
> **Pulses and beans:** dried red kidney beans contain a toxin and must be soaked overnight and boiled hard for at least 10 minutes before simmering; tinned beans are already cooked. Lentils and split peas need no soaking. Rinse them first, check for small stones, and keep a lid on, because they foam and boil over.
>
> **Stock and salt:** stock cubes and bought stocks are very salty. Use low-salt cubes, make them up weaker than the pack says, and do not salt a stock at all: it will be reduced or seasoned later,

and a salty stock cannot be fixed.

Thick soups catch and spit: a thick soup sticks to the base of the pan and blobs and spits when it bubbles. Stir often, keep the heat low, use a pan with a heavy base and a long spoon, and keep your face back.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

LEVEL 2 · ITALIAN

A cabbage and bean soup (ribollita-style)

55 minutes | 4 portions | thickening with beans and bread

An Italian peasant soup that is thick enough to eat with a fork. Tinned cannellini beans stand in for dried, and torn stale bread dissolves into the soup to thicken it. It is even better the next day (the name means 'reboiled').

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

3 tbsp	olive oil
1	onion, chopped
2	carrots, diced
2	celery sticks, diced
3	garlic cloves, sliced
400 g	tin of chopped tomatoes
800 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
2	tins of cannellini beans (400 g each), drained
200 g	cavolo nero or savoy cabbage, shredded
2	slices of stale bread, torn
1 tbsp	red wine vinegar

1. Sweat the onion, carrot and celery in the oil for **10 minutes.** Add the garlic, tomatoes and stock and simmer for 10 minutes.
2. Add the beans and cabbage and simmer for **20 minutes.** Mash a ladleful of beans against the side of the pan.
3. Stir in the bread, simmer for 5 minutes until thick, add the vinegar, taste and serve with a drizzle of olive oil.

> **BEANS, THICK SOUP AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Pulses and beans:** dried red kidney beans contain a toxin and must be soaked overnight and boiled hard for at least 10 minutes before simmering; tinned beans are already cooked. Lentils and split peas need no soaking. Rinse them first, check for small stones, and keep a lid on,

because they foam and boil over.

Thick soups catch and spit: a thick soup sticks to the base of the pan and blobs and spits when it bubbles. Stir often, keep the heat low, use a pan with a heavy base and a long spoon, and keep your face back.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Allergens: contains gluten (bread), celery and sulphites (vinegar).

LEVEL 3 · SCOTTISH

Cock-a-leekie

1 hour 15 minutes | 6 portions | a chicken and leek soup with a sweet note

A traditional Scottish soup of chicken and leeks, thickened with rice or barley. Prunes are the old-fashioned touch and add a gentle sweetness; leave them out if you prefer. Cook the leeks in two stages, so some melt and some stay green.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

4	chicken thighs, bone-in, skin removed
1.5 litres	chicken stock (chapter 1), unsalted
4	leeks, sliced
60 g	pearl barley or long-grain rice, rinsed
6	prunes, stoned and halved (optional)
1	bay leaf
2 tbsp	chopped parsley

1. Simmer the chicken, stock, bay leaf and two thirds of the leeks gently for **30 minutes.** Lift out the chicken, remove the bones, and shred the meat.
2. Add the barley (or rice) and simmer for **25 minutes** (15 for rice), then the prunes and the remaining leeks for the last 10 minutes.
3. Return the chicken, season carefully and serve with parsley.

RAW CHICKEN, BARLEY AND HOT POT

Raw chicken and carcasses: keep raw chicken and carcasses on their own board and plate, away from food that won't be cooked. Wash your hands, boards and knives in hot soapy water afterwards, never rinse raw chicken under the tap (it splashes bacteria around) and cook stock bones thoroughly.

Barley and gluten: pearl barley contains gluten and swells a lot, so a soup can turn into a stew if left. Add a little water when reheating, and use rice or buckwheat for a gluten-free soup.

Bones in stock: strain stock through a sieve before it goes near children or anyone eating from it, because small bones come loose in long simmering. Cooked chicken bones splinter, so never

give them to dogs.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Pulses soaked or not

Cooking time.

1. Cook split peas that were soaked for 4 hours alongside others that were not.

Look for: The soaked ones cook faster and more evenly; the dry ones take longer but give a slightly more intense flavour.

EXPERIMENT

Salt before or after

Texture.

1. Salt one pot of lentils at the start and another at the end.

Look for: Early salt barely matters for red lentils but can toughen the skins of dried beans; salting at the end gives you control.

EXPERIMENT

Mashed a little or whole

Body.

1. Mash a third of a pot of bean soup and leave a second pot whole.

Look for: The mashed pot is thick and creamy; the whole-bean pot is thinner and more brothy.

EXPERIMENT

A day older

Flavour.

1. Taste the soup fresh and then after a night in the fridge, reheated.

Look for: The next-day soup is thicker and deeper, because the flavours have married. Add water when reheating.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Red lentil soup				
Split pea and ham soup				
Cabbage and bean soup				
Cock-a-leekie				
Pulses soaked or not				
Salt before or after				
Mashed a little or whole				
A day older				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pulses still hard	Old pulses, or salt or acid added too early	Simmer longer; add acid and salt at the end

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soup sticks and burns	Heat too high, no stirring	Keep it low, stir often and use a heavy pan
Too thick	Pulses absorbed the stock	Add hot stock or water and re-season
Bland soup	Weak stock or no acid	Add salt, lemon or vinegar and good oil
Foam boils over	Pulses release foam	Skim it and keep a lid half on
Tough ham	Cooked too fast	Shred it and warm it only at the end

PULSES, HOT POT AND LEFTOVERS

Pulses and beans: dried red kidney beans contain a toxin and must be soaked overnight and boiled hard for at least 10 minutes before simmering; tinned beans are already cooked. Lentils and split peas need no soaking. Rinse them first, check for small stones, and keep a lid on, because they foam and boil over.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Reheating soup: reheat soup only once, until it is steaming hot all the way through (bubbling for a couple of minutes), not just warm. Do not reheat soup that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can cook lentils and split peas to a soft thick soup.
- ☐ I know to add salt and acid at the end.
- ☐ I can thicken a soup by mashing a third of it.
- ☐ I can use bread to thicken a soup.
- ☐ I can use ham stock without making the soup too salty.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 6 is Cold and Summer Soups: chilling, seasoning cold and keeping it fresh.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 6 · Cold and Summer Soups

SKILL GOAL

Make soups that taste fresh when cold, by seasoning boldly and chilling properly.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A cold soup is not a hot soup that has been left to cool. Cold **dulls flavour,** so it must be seasoned boldly, with more salt, more acid and more fresh herbs than you think, and tasted cold at the end. Some cold soups (gazpacho, cucumber) are never cooked at all, and others (vichyssoise, chilled pea) are cooked and then chilled fast. Use ripe, in-season vegetables, because there's nowhere for a poor tomato to hide.

Serve cold soups in chilled bowls with a fresh, crunchy or creamy topping: croutons, chopped cucumber, a swirl of oil or yogurt. Chilled soups need careful temperature control, so read the safety box. Leek and potato soup hot is in Cooking Skills: Potatoes 1, chapter 8; vichyssoise is its cold cousin, made smoother and richer.



Figure 6. Blend, season boldly, chill, serve in cold bowls.

The method

- **Choose ripe, flavourful vegetables;** a cold soup tastes only of what goes into it.
- **Blend very smooth,** then sieve if you want it silky.

- **Season boldly with salt and acid,** and taste again after chilling, because cold mutes flavour.
- **Chill for at least 2 hours,** or overnight, below 5°C.
- **Serve in chilled bowls** with a drizzle of good oil, herbs and something crunchy.

SOUP	COOKED?	BASE	FINISH
Gazpacho	No	Tomato, pepper, cucumber, bread	Olive oil, diced vegetables
Cucumber and yogurt	No	Cucumber, yogurt, mint	Dill, olive oil
Chilled pea	Briefly	Peas, stock, mint	Yogurt, lemon
Vichyssoise	Yes	Leek, potato, stock, cream	Chives, cream

CHILLED SOUPS, HOT POT AND ALLERGENS

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Sharp knives: a sharp knife is safer than a blunt one because it needs less force. Cut away from your body, steady the board with a damp cloth under it, curl your fingertips on the food you are holding and put the knife down flat when you are talking.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Gazpacho

20 minutes plus chilling | 4 portions | an uncooked soup that tastes of ripe tomatoes

The Spanish summer soup, and an excuse to buy the best tomatoes you can. Soak stale bread in a little water to give body, blend everything smooth, season boldly and chill for at least 2 hours.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1 kg	ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
1	cucumber, peeled and roughly chopped
1	red pepper, deseeded and chopped
1	garlic clove
1	thick slice of stale bread, torn and soaked in water
4 tbsp	extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp	red wine vinegar
1 tsp	flaked sea salt

1. Squeeze the bread dry, put it in a blender with the tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, garlic, 3 tbsp of oil, the vinegar and salt, and blend very smooth in batches.
2. Pass through a sieve for a silky soup, then taste and adjust the salt and vinegar.
3. Chill for **at least 2 hours.** Serve in cold bowls with a drizzle of oil and diced cucumber.

> **CHILLED SOUP, BLENDING AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Chilled soups:** a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.
>
> **Sharp knives:** a sharp knife is safer than a blunt one because it needs less force. Cut away from your body, steady the board with a damp cloth under it, curl your fingertips on the food you are holding and put the knife down flat when you are talking.
>
> **Allergens in soup and stock:** celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests

what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Allergens: contains gluten (bread) and sulphites (vinegar).

LEVEL 1 · FRESH

Cucumber and yogurt soup

15 minutes plus chilling | 4 portions | a fresh no-cook soup in minutes

A Balkan-style soup, cool and tangy, in 15 minutes. Grated cucumber and thick yogurt need only garlic, mint and olive oil. Thin it with a little cold water or ice and season well, because yogurt is mild.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

2	cucumbers, peeled and grated
500 g	plain Greek yogurt
150 ml	cold water
1	small garlic clove, grated
2 tbsp	chopped fresh mint
1 tbsp	chopped dill
1 tbsp	extra virgin olive oil
1	lemon, juice

1. Stir the cucumber, yogurt, water, garlic, mint, dill and half the lemon juice together. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Chill for **at least 1 hour.** Taste and add more lemon or salt.
3. Serve in cold bowls with olive oil and a little extra dill.

CHILLED SOUP AND ALLERGENS

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

Sharp knives: a sharp knife is safer than a blunt one because it needs less force. Cut away from your body, steady the board with a damp cloth under it, curl your fingertips on the food you are holding and put the knife down flat when you are talking.

Allergens: contains milk.

LEVEL 2 · GREEN

Chilled pea soup

20 minutes plus chilling | 4 portions | cooling a soup fast to keep its colour

The pea and mint soup of chapter 4, served cold. To keep it bright green, cook the peas for only 3 minutes, then plunge the soup into an ice bath before blending. Add the mint at the end and season boldly.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

500 g	frozen peas
500 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
1	small onion, chopped
1 tbsp	olive oil
15 g	fresh mint leaves
1	lemon, juice
3 tbsp	plain yogurt, to serve

1. Sweat the onion in the oil for 8 minutes, add the stock and bring to a boil. Add the peas and cook for **3 minutes.**
2. Stand the pan in a sink of iced water for 10 minutes, add the mint, and blend smooth. Season with salt, pepper and lemon juice.
3. Chill for **at least 2 hours,** thin with cold water if needed, and serve with yogurt.

HOT BLENDING, CHILLING AND ALLERGENS

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

> **Allergens in soup and stock:** celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 3 · CLASSIC

Vichyssoise

50 minutes plus chilling | 4 portions | a silky cooked soup served cold

Leek and potato soup, cooked white (no browning), blended very smooth, enriched with cream and chilled. It needs a good seasoning once cold. Use only the white and pale green of the leeks for a pale soup.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

30 g	butter
3	leeks (white and pale green), sliced
1	small onion, chopped
300 g	floury potatoes, peeled and diced
800 ml	vegetable stock, unsalted
100 ml	double cream
1 tbsp	chopped chives

1. Melt the butter and sweat the leeks and onion with the lid on, without colour, for **10 minutes.**
2. Add the potatoes and stock and simmer for **20 minutes** until soft. Blend very smooth, pass through a sieve, and stir in the cream.
3. Cool quickly in an ice bath, chill for **at least 3 hours,** season boldly, and serve with chives.

HOT BLENDING, CREAM, CHILLING AND ALLERGENS

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Hot milk and cream: milk and cream boil over in seconds and burn worse than water. Keep the heat low, stay at the pan, and add dairy at the end. Never boil a soup once it has cream, or it may split.

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

Allergens: contains milk and celery.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Seasoned cold or warm

Seasoning.

1. Season one pot while warm and another after chilling, and compare when cold.

Look for: The soup seasoned while warm tastes flat when cold; adjusting it cold gives the right level.

EXPERIMENT

Blended long or short

Texture.

1. Blend half a pot of gazpacho for 30 seconds and half for 3 minutes.

Look for: The long blend is silky and slightly paler; the short one is more rustic and stays red.

EXPERIMENT

A night in the fridge

Flavour.

1. Taste a gazpacho the same day and after a night in the fridge.

Look for: The flavours blend overnight and the soup tastes rounder; adjust the salt and vinegar again.

EXPERIMENT

An ice cube or not

Temperature.

1. Serve one bowl straight from the fridge and another with an ice cube dropped in.

Look for: A chilled bowl is better than ice, which dilutes the soup as it melts; chill the bowls instead.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Gazpacho				
Cucumber and yogurt soup				
Chilled pea soup				
Vichyssoise				
Seasoned cold or warm				
Blended long or short				
A night in the fridge				
An ice cube or not				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Flat, bland soup	Under-seasoned	Add salt and acid; taste when cold
Watery gazpacho	Watery tomatoes	Use ripe tomatoes; add bread or oil
Grey-green pea soup	Overcooked peas	Cook for 3 minutes, then cool in an ice bath

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Grainy vichyssoise	Waxy potatoes or under-blended	Use floury potatoes; blend, then sieve
Bitter soup	Peel or pips of cucumber, or old garlic	Peel and deseed; use fresh garlic
Soup warm in the middle	Not chilled long enough	Chill for at least 2 hours below 5°C

CHILLED SOUPS AND LEFTOVERS

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

Blending hot soup: hot liquid expands in a sealed blender and can blow the lid off and scald you badly. The safest choice is a stick blender in a deep pan, held low with the head fully under the surface. With a jug blender, cool the soup for a few minutes, fill it no more than half, take out the small centre cap of the lid, cover it with a folded cloth, hold it down and start on the lowest speed.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can season a soup for serving cold.
- ☐ I can make a soup without cooking it.
- ☐ I can cool a soup quickly in an ice bath.
- ☐ I keep cold soups below 5°C.
- ☐ I can serve soup in chilled bowls.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 7 is Garnishes and Soup Breads: texture, finishing and what goes beside the bowl.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 7 · Garnishes and Soup Breads

SKILL GOAL

Finish a bowl of soup with crunch, freshness and bread so it feels like a complete meal.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A bowl of soup is mostly one texture and one temperature, so what you put on and beside it matters. Aim for contrast: **crunch** on a smooth soup (croutons, crisp chickpeas), **cream** or yogurt on a spicy one, **freshness** (herb oil, lemon zest, chives) on a rich one, and **bread** beside any soup that is meant to be a meal. Add garnishes at the last minute so they stay crisp or bright.

Everything here is made from pantry basics and leftovers: stale bread becomes croutons, a tin of chickpeas becomes a crisp topping, and a few herbs become an oil. The soups from chapters 3 to 6 of this course all benefit. The quick breads below need no yeast.

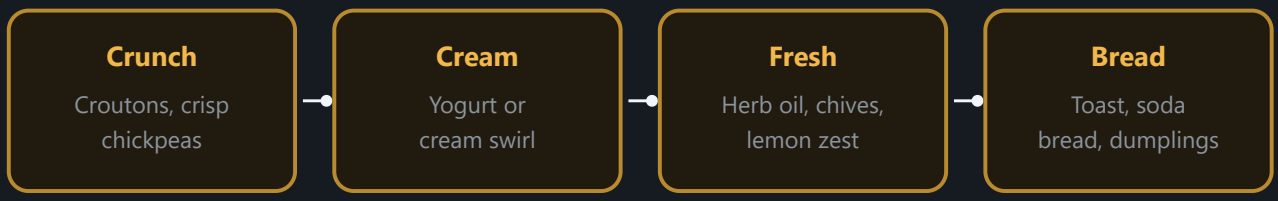


Figure 7. Crunch, cream, freshness and bread: four ways to finish a bowl.

The method

- **Match the garnish to the soup:** crunch on smooth, cream on spicy, freshness on rich.
- **Dry everything well** before frying or baking, or it steams instead of crisping.
- **Make crisp garnishes ahead** and store them airtight, but add them at the last moment.
- **Add herb oil and swirls with a spoon,** in a thin line or a dot, not a puddle.

- **Serve bread hot,** with butter, or on the side to dunk.

GARNISH OR BREAD	BEST WITH	METHOD	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Croutons	Any smooth soup	Bake or fry cubes of bread	15 minutes
Crisp chickpeas	Tomato, pumpkin, lentil	Roast with paprika	25 minutes
Herb oil	Pea, potato, cauliflower	Blend herbs with oil	10 minutes
Soda bread	Hearty and clear soups	No yeast, bake	45 minutes

HOT OIL, HOT OVEN, GRILL AND ALLERGENS

Hot oil and frying: shallow-frying croutons and crisps uses hot oil that spits. Dry everything well, add it away from you, use a splash guard if you have one, keep the handle turned in and never leave the pan.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Hot grill: a grill is extremely hot and food under it burns in a minute. Stay at the cooker, use oven gloves and keep the grill pan clear of loose items. Cheese bubbles and drips, so use a tray.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Croutons and crisp toppings

30 minutes | 4 portions | turning stale bread and a tin of chickpeas into crunch

Baked croutons use less oil than fried and are easier. Crisp chickpeas are a good gluten-free alternative. Dry them thoroughly first, so they crisp rather than steam. Both keep for a few days in an airtight tin.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

3	thick slices of day-old bread, cut into 1.5 cm cubes
3 tbsp	olive oil, divided
1	garlic clove, crushed
400 g	tin of chickpeas, drained and dried well
1 tsp	smoked paprika
20 g	Parmesan, finely grated (optional)

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Toss the bread cubes with 2 tbsp oil, the garlic and salt, and bake for **10 to 12 minutes,** shaking once, until golden.
2. Toss the chickpeas with 1 tbsp oil, the paprika and salt, and roast for **20 to 25 minutes,** shaking twice, until crisp.
3. Cool, store airtight, and add Parmesan to the croutons for the last 2 minutes if you wish.

HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Allergens: contains gluten (bread) and milk (Parmesan).

LEVEL 2 · FINISH

A herb oil and a yogurt swirl

15 minutes | 4 portions | finishing a soup with colour and freshness

A bright green herb oil lifts a pale soup, and a swirl of seasoned yogurt cools a spicy one. Blanch the herbs for 10 seconds to keep the oil green, then blend and strain. Keep the oil in the fridge for up to 3 days.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

30 g	fresh parsley or basil leaves
100 ml	mild olive or rapeseed oil
1 pinch	flaked sea salt
100 g	plain yogurt
1	lemon, zest and a squeeze of juice
1 tbsp	water

1. Blanch the herbs in boiling water for 10 seconds, plunge into cold water, squeeze dry, then blend with the oil and salt until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve.
2. Stir the yogurt with the lemon zest, juice and water to a pouring consistency.
3. Drizzle the herb oil in a thin line and swirl the yogurt on top just before serving.

HOT WATER, STORAGE AND ALLERGENS

Hot sauce: a thickening sauce bubbles and spits, and hot sauce sticks to skin and burns worse than water. Stir with a long spoon, keep your face back and turn the handle of the pan inwards.

Chilled soups: a cold soup is safe only if it stays cold. Cool cooked soup quickly in shallow containers, keep it below 5°C, serve it within about 2 days, and don't leave it on the table for more than an hour or two on a warm day.

Allergens: contains milk.

LEVEL 2 · BREAD

Cheese on toast and soda bread

1 hour | 1 loaf (8 slices) | two quick breads for a soup supper

Soda bread needs no yeast or kneading: bicarbonate of soda reacts with buttermilk to make it rise. Mix quickly and bake at once. Cheese on toast, the classic partner to tomato soup, is made under the grill with mustard for bite.

INGREDIENTS (1 LOAF)

250 g	wholemeal flour
250 g	plain flour
1 tsp	bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp	flaked sea salt
420 ml	buttermilk (or milk with 1 tbsp lemon juice)
4	slices of bread, for the cheese on toast
120 g	mature Cheddar, grated
1 tsp	mustard

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Mix the flours, soda and salt, stir in the buttermilk until just combined, shape into a round, cut a deep cross, and bake for **40 to 45 minutes** until it sounds hollow when tapped.
2. Toast the bread on one side under the grill. Mix the cheese and mustard and pile on the untoasted side.
3. Grill for **3 to 4 minutes** until bubbling and golden.

HOT OVEN, GRILL AND ALLERGENS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

Hot grill: a grill is extremely hot and food under it burns in a minute. Stay at the cooker, use oven gloves and keep the grill pan clear of loose items. Cheese bubbles and drips, so use a tray.

> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk and mustard.

LEVEL 3 · DUMPLINGS

Dumplings in a broth

45 minutes | 4 portions (8 dumplings) | light dumplings that steam on the soup

Dumplings cook in the steam on top of a simmering broth, not in it. Rub the suet into the flour, mix with water to a soft dough, and keep the lid on while they cook. Don't lift it for the first 15 minutes, or they turn heavy.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1 litres	chicken broth (chapter 3)
100 g	self-raising flour
50 g	vegetable suet
1 tbsp	chopped parsley
4 tbsp	cold water
1 pinch	flaked sea salt

1. Bring the broth to a gentle simmer. Mix the flour, suet, parsley and salt with enough water to make a soft dough, and shape into 8 balls.
2. Drop the dumplings onto the surface of the broth, cover, and cook for **15 to 20 minutes** without lifting the lid.
3. Check one is cooked through (fluffy, not doughy in the centre) and serve at once.

RAW DOUGH, HOT POT AND ALLERGENS

Suet and raw dough: dumpling dough can contain raw flour and egg, so cook it all the way through, and wash your hands and bowls afterwards. Beef suet is not vegetarian; use vegetable suet if you wish.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

> **Allergens:** contains gluten and celery.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Fried or baked croutons

Crunch.

1. Make a batch fried in shallow oil and a batch baked with a little oil.

Look for: Fried are crisper and more golden; baked use less oil and are lighter, and are easier to make in bulk.

EXPERIMENT

Oil drizzled or swirled

Look and taste.

1. Drizzle herb oil on one bowl and stir it into another.

Look for: Drizzled oil gives a bright line and bursts of flavour; stirred in, it disappears and flavours the whole bowl.

EXPERIMENT

Hot or cold bread

Texture.

1. Taste soda bread hot from the oven and after cooling for an hour.

Look for: Hot soda bread is soft and steamy; cooled, it is firmer and slices more neatly.

EXPERIMENT

Garnish added early or late

Crispness.

1. Add croutons to one bowl at the start and another at the table.

Look for: Early croutons go soggy in a minute; late ones stay crunchy for the first half of the bowl.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Croutons and crisp toppings				
Herb oil and yogurt swirl				
Cheese on toast and soda bread				
Dumplings in a broth				
Fried or baked croutons				
Oil drizzled or swirled				
Hot or cold bread				
Garnish added early or late				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soggy croutons	Added early or not dried	Add at the table; bake until fully crisp
Chickpeas not crisp	Not dried well or tray crowded	Dry thoroughly and roast in a single layer
Herb oil brown	Herbs not blanched	Blanch for 10 seconds and cool in iced water

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Heavy soda bread	Overmixed or oven too cool	Mix just until combined; bake at once
Heavy dumplings	Lid lifted or broth boiling	Keep the lid on and the broth at a simmer
Cheese burns	Grill too close	Lower the shelf and watch it

HOT OIL, GRILL, HOT OVEN AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oil and frying: shallow-frying croutons and crisps uses hot oil that spits. Dry everything well, add it away from you, use a splash guard if you have one, keep the handle turned in and never leave the pan.

Hot grill: a grill is extremely hot and food under it burns in a minute. Stay at the cooker, use oven gloves and keep the grill pan clear of loose items. Cheese bubbles and drips, so use a tray.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can make croutons and crisp chickpeas.
- ☐ I can make a herb oil.
- ☐ I can make soda bread without yeast.
- ☐ I can cook dumplings on a broth.
- ☐ I match a garnish to the soup.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapter 8 is A Soup Supper: planning, making ahead and freezing.

Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1

Chapter 8 · A Soup Supper

SKILL GOAL

Plan, make ahead, store and serve soup so it becomes a reliable and varied supper.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Soup is the ideal make-ahead meal: most improve overnight, they freeze well, and one big pot feeds several suppers. The skills are **planning** (a soup, a bread and a garnish), **storing** (cool fast, chill or freeze in labelled portions) and **reheating** (gently, until steaming hot all the way through). A good supper soup has something to dunk, something to crunch and something fresh on top.

This chapter brings the whole course together: Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1, chapters 1 to 7. For the Fish and Shellfish soups and stews see Cooking Skills: Fish and Shellfish 2, chapter 3, and for another soup chapter Cooking Skills: Potatoes 1, chapter 8. At the end you write a signature soup: your own base, your own finish.

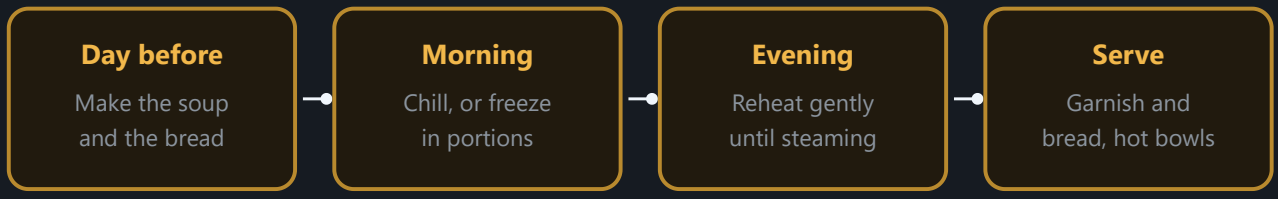


Figure 8. Make ahead, store, reheat and serve: a soup supper planned backwards.

The method

- **Choose a soup, a bread and a garnish** that contrast in texture.
- **Make the soup the day before,** and cool it quickly in shallow containers.

- **Chill or freeze in portions,** labelled with the soup and the date.
- **Reheat slowly until steaming hot,** adding a splash of stock or water if it has thickened.
- **Finish at the table** with the garnish and hot bowls.

DAY	SOUP	WITH	FROM
Monday	Roasted tomato and red pepper soup	Cheese on toast	Chapters 4 and 7
Tuesday	Red lentil soup	Soda bread	Chapters 5 and 7
Wednesday	Chicken and vegetable broth	Dumplings	Chapters 3 and 7
Thursday	Split pea and ham soup	Crusty bread	Chapters 1 and 5
Friday	Cold gazpacho (summer) or cauliflower soup	Croutons and herb oil	Chapters 4, 6 and 7

STORING, FREEZING AND REHEATING SOUP

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Freezing and defrosting soup: cool soup quickly, then freeze it in labelled flat bags or tubs with a gap at the top for expansion, for up to about 3 months (general guidance). Defrost in the fridge overnight or in a pan over a low heat, and reheat until steaming hot. Soups with cream, egg or potato may separate or turn grainy, so freeze the base and add cream or fresh potato when you reheat.

Reheating soup: reheat soup only once, until it is steaming hot all the way through (bubbling for a couple of minutes), not just warm. Do not reheat soup that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A soup supper for four

1 hour (soup made the day before) | 4 portions | a supper built around a soup

Roasted tomato and red pepper soup (chapter 4), cheese on toast (chapter 7) and a herb oil garnish. Make the soup the day before and reheat it. The cheese on toast takes minutes under the grill just before serving.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	batch of roasted tomato and red pepper soup (chapter 4)
4	slices of bread
120 g	mature Cheddar, grated
1 tsp	mustard
2 tbsp	herb oil (chapter 7), optional
4 tbsp	plain yogurt, to swirl

1. Reheat the soup gently in a large pan for **10 to 15 minutes,** stirring, until steaming hot, adding a splash of stock if it has thickened.
2. Make the cheese on toast under a hot grill for 3 to 4 minutes, as in chapter 7.
3. Ladle the soup into hot bowls, swirl in the yogurt, add the herb oil and serve with the cheese on toast.

REHEATING, GRILL AND ALLERGENS

Reheating soup: reheat soup only once, until it is steaming hot all the way through (bubbling for a couple of minutes), not just warm. Do not reheat soup that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Hot grill: a grill is extremely hot and food under it burns in a minute. Stay at the cooker, use oven gloves and keep the grill pan clear of loose items. Cheese bubbles and drips, so use a tray.

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and

> stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 2 · PLAN

A week of soups

Planning: 20 minutes | 5 suppers for 2 | planning a week around two big pots

Make two big pots on the weekend (say lentil and chicken broth), plan three more soups that take under 30 minutes (pea, egg-drop, gazpacho), and use the freezer for the rest. Each supper has its own bread or garnish so it never feels repeated.

INGREDIENTS (5 SUPPERS FOR 2)

1	big pot of red lentil soup (Monday and Tuesday)
1	pot of chicken and vegetable broth (Wednesday)
1	batch of pea and mint soup (Thursday)
1	batch of gazpacho or cauliflower soup (Friday)
1	loaf of soda bread, sliced and frozen

1. On Sunday write the plan: which soup, which bread or garnish, and which chapter. Make the two big pots.
2. Cool, divide into portions and chill what you will eat in the next 2 days; freeze the rest, labelled.
3. Each evening reheat or make the planned soup, add the garnish and tick it off.

STORAGE, FREEZING AND ALLERGENS

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Freezing and defrosting soup: cool soup quickly, then freeze it in labelled flat bags or tubs with a gap at the top for expansion, for up to about 3 months (general guidance). Defrost in the fridge overnight or in a pan over a low heat, and reheat until steaming hot. Soups with cream, egg or potato may separate or turn grainy, so freeze the base and add cream or fresh potato when you reheat.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and

> stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

LEVEL 2 · FREEZER

Freezing and reheating soup

30 minutes plus freezing | 6 portions | portioning, labelling and reheating

Freeze soup in single-portion bags laid flat, which freeze fast and stack neatly. Leave out cream, yogurt and fresh herbs, and add them when you reheat. Reheat slowly from frozen in a pan with a splash of water, stirring, until steaming hot.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

1.5 litres	cooled soup (lentil, pea, tomato or broth)
6	freezer bags
1	permanent marker
1	tray that fits the freezer

1. Cool the soup in shallow containers, chill, and ladle into bags in 250 ml portions. Press out the air, seal and label with the soup and date.
2. Lay the bags flat on a tray to freeze for **3 hours,** then stack. Use within about 3 months.
3. To reheat, run the bag under cold water to release the block, tip into a pan with a splash of water, and heat gently for **10 to 15 minutes** until steaming hot.

FREEZING AND REHEATING

Freezing and defrosting soup: cool soup quickly, then freeze it in labelled flat bags or tubs with a gap at the top for expansion, for up to about 3 months (general guidance). Defrost in the fridge overnight or in a pan over a low heat, and reheat until steaming hot. Soups with cream, egg or potato may separate or turn grainy, so freeze the base and add cream or fresh potato when you reheat.

Reheating soup: reheat soup only once, until it is steaming hot all the way through (bubbling for a couple of minutes), not just warm. Do not reheat soup that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2

> days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

LEVEL 3 · SIGNATURE

Your signature soup

Your choice | your choice | designing a soup from your own favourite methods

Choose a base (stock and an onion), a main ingredient (a vegetable, a pulse or a meat), a texture (smooth, chunky or clear) and a finish (garnish and bread), and write the recipe as you cook it. Make it twice, changing one thing. A signature soup is one you can make without a recipe.

INGREDIENTS (YOUR CHOICE)

1	stock of your choice from chapters 1 and 2
1	main ingredient (vegetable, pulse or meat)
1	garnish and bread from chapter 7
1	notebook and pen

1. Choose your stock, main ingredient, texture and finish, and write them down before you start.
2. Cook it, noting quantities, times and what you would change.
3. Make it again with your change, then write the final recipe on a card.

HOT POT AND ALLERGENS

Hot pot and hot steam: a big pan of simmering stock or soup is heavy and scalding. Keep the handle turned in, use a ladle rather than pouring, lift the lid away from your face, and keep children and pets out of the kitchen while you move it.

Cooling and keeping stock: stock is an ideal place for bacteria to grow. Strain it, then cool it quickly in shallow containers or an ice bath, chill within 1 to 2 hours, and use within about 2 days (fish stock within 1 day) or freeze it. Never leave a big pot to cool slowly on the hob or worktop overnight. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

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Experiments

EXPERIMENT

A timed soup supper

Planning.

1. Make a soup supper for two with a timer, writing down when each task started and finished.

Look for: You will find the soup is mostly waiting; use that time to make the bread or the garnish.

EXPERIMENT

Swapping the stock

Flavour.

1. Make the same soup with chicken stock, vegetable stock and water.

Look for: Stock transforms the soup; water is thin, vegetable stock is light, and chicken stock is rounder and savoury.

EXPERIMENT

Frozen against fresh

Quality.

1. Eat a lentil soup fresh and the same soup after a month in the freezer.

Look for: Properly stored lentil soup is nearly identical; creamy soups may separate a little. Add cream after reheating.

EXPERIMENT

Your own signature soup

Making it yours.

1. Make your signature soup for a friend and ask for one comment.

Look for: A repeated soup improves every time. Write it down.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Soup supper for four				
A week of soups				
Freezing and reheating soup				
Signature soup				
A timed soup supper				
Swapping the stock				
Frozen against fresh				
Your own signature soup				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soup too thick the next day	Pulses and potato absorb liquid	Add stock or water when reheating
Freezer soup grainy	Cream or potato froze badly	Add cream after reheating; blend again
Soup tastes flat after reheating	Seasoning faded	Add salt, lemon and fresh herbs
Soup sticks while reheating	Heat too high	Warm slowly and stir

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Bread soggy	Added too early	Serve on the side, toasted
Too much soup	Pot too big	Freeze portions and label them

STORING, REHEATING AND ALLERGENS

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Reheating soup: reheat soup only once, until it is steaming hot all the way through (bubbling for a couple of minutes), not just warm. Do not reheat soup that has been left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Allergens in soup and stock: celery is one of the 14 major allergens and is in most stocks and stock cubes. Check cubes for celery, gluten, milk, soya, mustard and sulphites, and tell guests what is in the pot, because soup hides ingredients.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can plan a soup supper with bread and a garnish.
- ☐ I can cool, chill and freeze soup safely.
- ☐ I can reheat soup until steaming hot.
- ☐ I can make a stock and a soup from scratch.
- ☐ I have a signature soup.

NEXT CHAPTER

Congratulations: you have finished Cooking Skills: Soups and Stocks 1. A second soups course is not yet planned; the series continues with the other cooking skills courses.