KR

COOKERY COURSE

Korean Cookery

A beginner's guide to cooking a Korean meal at home, built from open sources.

10 Chapters

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Generated with Claude

KOREAN COOKERY

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Korean Cookery

Chapter 1 · Why Korean Cooking? Scope, Pantry & Sources

SKILL GOAL

Understand how a Korean meal is put together, stock a first pantry, and make and taste a first dipping sauce.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked Descriptions of dishes and ingredients come from Wikipedia's articles on Korean cuisine (the first 100,000 of about 294,000 characters), banchan, gochujang, doenjang and gochugaru, as I read them. I read no cookbooks. **I cannot cook, so every quantity and time in this course is my own starting point and not a tested recipe.** Taste and adjust. Buying advice for the United Kingdom is also mine and unverified, because availability changes.

The basics

The Wikipedia article calls Korean cuisine "largely based on rice, vegetables, seafood and (at least in South Korea) meats". It says meals "are named for the number of side dishes" that accompany steam-cooked short-grain rice, that soup is part of the main course and not a starter or dessert, and that "Kimchi is served at nearly every meal." So a Korean meal is not one dish with a side. It is several things on the table together, and cooking it means learning a small set of parts.

The shape of a meal

PART	WHAT IT IS	WHERE IT GOES
Bap	Cooked rice	A bowl for each person
Guk or *tang*	Soup	A bowl for each person

PART	WHAT IT IS	WHERE IT GOES
Jjigae	A thicker, heavier-seasoned stew (the article's wording)	A shared pot in the middle
Banchan	"Small side dishes served along with cooked rice", in small portions "meant to be finished at each meal"	In the middle, to share
Kimchi	A banchan the article says appears at nearly every meal	In the middle
A main dish	A secondary main course such as *galbi* or *bulgogi*	In the centre

The banchan article says the settings are counted in *cheop*: 3, 5, 7, 9 or 12, with kimchi not included in the count. It associates 12 cheop with royal cuisine, and the banchan article suggests more formal meals have more banchan, though I did not see a source for that. A passage on who got how many (a king 12, family members up to 9) is tagged "citation needed", so I treat it as a belief and not a fact. For home cooking, the practical lesson is that a plain meal is rice, soup, kimchi and two or three small dishes.

Fermentation is the flavour base

The article lists the common ingredients as "sesame oil, doenjang, soy sauce, salt, garlic, ginger, gochugaru, gochujang, and napa cabbage", and says fermented condiments are called *jang*, including *ganjang*, *doenjang* and *gochujang*. The banchan article adds that fermentation was preferred for preserving food because cooking oil was scarce, a claim it states without a source in what I read. Chapter 4 covers kimchi in detail.

The pantry

Seven things will be used again and again through the course. The "What the source says" column is from the articles; the last column is mine and unverified.

ITEM	WHAT THE SOURCE SAYS	MY NOTE
Ganjang (soy sauce)	The doenjang article says the filtrate from aged meju is boiled to become ganjang.	Look for "Korean soup soy sauce" or "all-purpose" on labels; check the label for wheat and soy, which are allergens.

ITEM	WHAT THE SOURCE SAYS	MY NOTE
Doenjang	A fermented bean paste of soybean and brine, made from dried bricks (*meju*) aged in crocks. Traditional versions use "soybeans and brine only"; factory versions contain wheat flour, and some contain anchovies.	Salty and savoury. Read the label for wheat, anchovy and soy, which matter if you avoid them.
Gochujang	A "savory, sweet, and spicy fermented condiment" of red chili powder, glutinous rice, fermented soybean powder, malt and salt; "a dark red paste, with a rich, piquant flavor".	Sweet and spicy. Brands vary in heat and sweetness; start small.
Gochugaru	"Dried chili powder or flakes", from fine powder to flakes; "mildly hot to very hot"; "a vibrant red color"; "spicy, sweet, and slightly smoky".	Not the same as ordinary chilli flakes, which I expect to be hotter and different in flavour; buy the Korean kind if you can.
Sesame oil	Listed among the common ingredients.	Toasted sesame oil is strong; use by the teaspoon, at the end.
Garlic and ginger	Both listed among the common ingredients.	Fresh; buy small amounts.
Short-grain rice	The preferred grain; steam-cooked.	Chapter 2 covers how to cook it.

HEAT, ALLERGENS AND THE NUMBERS TO IGNORE

Chilli heat: the gochugaru article says the powder runs "from mildly hot to very hot". It also gives a figure of 1,500 Scoville units, but that applies to green, unripe peppers only, so do not use it to guess the heat of the powder. Start with half the amount in any recipe and add more.
Allergens: soy sauce, doenjang and gochujang are made from soybeans, and many contain wheat; some doenjang contains anchovies. Sesame is a common allergen too. Read every label.
Raw garlic and chilli: wash your hands after handling chilli powder and do not touch your eyes.

What the sources disagree about

- **Where kimchi began.** The Korean cuisine article says Baekje "was known for cold foods and fermented foods like kimchi", and also that the Goguryeo people are "attributed with the earliest kimchi". It does not reconcile them.
- **Gochujang's age.** The article says chilli peppers reached East Asia through Portuguese traders in the early 16th century, but that the article also mentions pepper pastes older than

the arrival of chilli peppers. So the old texts describe a different product from today's chilli paste, and I do not repeat the older dates as the history of gochujang.

- **Health claims.** The articles say gochujang "was believed to revitalize" the sick and that some studies are cited for chilli benefits. These are hedged and vague. This course makes no health claims about kimchi, fermented pastes or chilli.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A tasting of the three pastes

10 minutes | No cooking | knowing what each jar tastes like

Before you cook with a jar, taste it on its own, in a tiny amount, with something plain. Put a little of each on a spoon with a slice of cucumber, one at a time, and write down what you taste.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

1 tsp	doenjang
1 tsp	gochujang
1 tsp	Korean soy sauce (ganjang)
1	cucumber, sliced into rounds
1	glass of water to rinse your mouth between tastes

1. Put the three on a plate with a teaspoon each. Taste the cucumber alone first.
2. Taste each paste on its own tiny dab, then with cucumber. Rinse with water between them.
3. Write down for each: salty, sweet, spicy, savoury, sour, how thick, how long the taste lasts. There is no right answer.

LEVEL 1 · FIRST SAUCE

Ssamjang, a dipping sauce for wraps

10 minutes | 2 portions | mixing a sauce from the pantry

The doenjang article says doenjang is "mixed with garlic, sesame oil, and sometimes gochujang to make ssamjang, eaten in leaf wraps with meats such as samgyeopsal and bulgogi." Here the leaves are lettuce and the filling is cucumber, so you need no meat. The amounts are my own starting point.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

2 tbsp	doenjang
1 tbsp	gochujang
1 small clove	garlic, grated
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1	spring onion, finely sliced
1 tsp	toasted sesame seeds (optional)
6	large lettuce leaves, washed and dried
1	cucumber, cut into sticks

1. Mix the doenjang, gochujang, garlic and sesame oil in a small bowl until smooth.
2. Taste a tiny amount on the tip of a spoon. If it is too salty, add a few drops of water; if too hot, add a little more doenjang.
3. Stir in the spring onion and sesame seeds. Put the sauce in the middle of the table.
4. To eat: put a stick of cucumber in a lettuce leaf, add a small dab of sauce, fold it up and eat it in one bite.

> **RAW GARLIC AND ALLERGENS**
>
> Raw grated garlic is strong; start with half a clove if you are not used to it. Wash the lettuce well. The sauce contains soy and often wheat and sesame, and some doenjang contains anchovy. It keeps for a day or two in a covered container in the fridge, but I have not tested that, so smell it first and throw it away if in doubt.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · THE RATIO

Make the sauce three ways: 2 parts doenjang to 1 gochujang (above), equal parts of each, and 1 part doenjang to 2 gochujang. Taste each in a lettuce wrap and write down which you prefer and why.

EXPERIMENT 2 · GARLIC, RAW OR RESTED

Make two small bowls of the sauce. In one, stir in the garlic straight away; in the other, let the garlic sit in the sesame oil for 10 minutes first. Does the bite change? Write down what you notice.

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Describe the parts of a plain Korean meal and where each goes on the table, using the words *bap*, *guk*, *jjigae*, *banchan* and kimchi. Explain what *cheop* counts and what it leaves out.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Visit a shop (or browse online) and read the label of one doenjang and one gochujang. Write down the ingredients, whether each contains wheat or fish, and the heat or sweetness if the label says. Then say which of these you would buy first and why.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Make the ssamjang, taste your own versions from the two experiments, and write a short note: the ratio you prefer, what the garlic did, and one thing you would change next time.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

I read only the first third of the Korean cuisine article. The Wikipedia page on *jang* as a group returned an error, and the five-colour idea (*obangsaek*) from my planning sketch was not in the parts I read, so I leave it out. The gochugaru article does not say what it is used for or give substitutes, and the sources say nothing about where to buy these ingredients in the UK.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **A meal:** rice, soup, a shared stew, banchan and kimchi, with a main dish in the centre
- **Cheop:** counts the banchan (3, 5, 7, 9, 12); kimchi is not counted
- **The pastes:** doenjang (savoury, soybean), gochujang (sweet and spicy), ganjang (soy sauce)
- **Gochugaru:** Korean chilli powder or flakes; "mildly hot to very hot"
- **Ssamjang:** doenjang, garlic, sesame oil and sometimes gochujang; eaten in leaf wraps
- **Always:** taste small, read allergen labels, start with half the heat
- **Check:** every quantity (mine, untested) and what is on sale near you

Next chapter: Rice and the Korean Table, which covers cooking short-grain rice and how the table is set and eaten.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 2 · Rice and the Korean Table

SKILL GOAL

Cook a pot of short-grain rice that is tender and not mushy, use the scorched crust at the bottom, and set a simple Korean table for two.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on bap, nurungji (the Korea section, read in full, but not the last 20,000 characters of the page), sujeo and bibimbap (the text up to the references). Wikipedia's page on Korean table etiquette returned an error, so the table-setting advice rests on the sujeo article alone and is thin. **The bap article gives no water-to-rice ratio, so every quantity and time in the recipes is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** Food-safety advice on cooked rice is general advice of mine, not from these articles.

The basics

In Chapter 1 the meal started with *bap*, cooked rice. The bap article says it was traditionally cooked in a cast-iron *gamasot* for large families, that today an electric rice cooker is usually used, and that a heavy-bottomed pot or a stone *dolsot* also works. Most of the passages about cooking carry "citation needed" tags, so I give them as the article's description and not as settled fact.

Kinds of bap

NAME	WHAT IT IS, PER THE ARTICLE
Ssalbap / baekmi-bap	White rice
Heungmi-bap	Black rice
Hyeonmi-bap	Brown rice
Chapssal-bap	Glutinous rice

NAME	WHAT IT IS, PER THE ARTICLE
Japgok-bap	Multi-grain rice
Ogok-bap	Five-grain rice, eaten on Daeboreum
Kongbap, *bori-bap*, *patbap*	Rice with beans, barley, red beans (single added grains)
Namul-bap, *gamja-bap*, *gulbap*	Rice cooked with vegetables, potato, oyster

The article also says bap is "widely considered as medicinal by many Koreans", sourced to a 2017 paper. I make no health claim here.

The method the article describes

1. Scrub and rinse the rice several times. The cloudy washing water is called *tteumul* (the description is tagged "better source needed").
2. Soak about 30 minutes. Brown rice and large grains need several hours or overnight.
3. In a regular pot, cook over medium-high heat with the lid on for about ten minutes, stirring, then simmer on low for five to ten more minutes.

Nurungji and sungnyung

The nurungji article says: "After boiling and serving rice, a thin crust of scorched rice will usually be left in the bottom of the cooking pot." It "can be eaten in its crisp state as a snack or as an after meal rice tea by adding hot water", and can be reboiled with water to make *nurungji bap*. It says the 17th-century medical book *Dongui Bogam* records it as "considered as a remedy" for food that is hard to swallow or upsets the stomach; I pass that on as a historical record, not advice. The bap article calls the infusion *sungnyung*. The nurungji article only lists sungnyung in a link and does not describe it, so my directions below for the tea are mine.

Spoon and chopsticks

The sujeo article says *sujeo* is the term for the set of utensils: metal chopsticks (often stainless steel, flat-ish in section) and a long-handled shallow spoon. It states:

- Using both at once is described as a recent way to eat faster; food is more often eaten with chopsticks alone.
- "The spoon may be laid down on the rice bowl, or soup bowl, if it has not been used."

- Chopsticks should not be stood upright in food, especially rice, which "is considered to bring bad luck" because it resembles offerings at graves.
- Holding the spoon and chopsticks together in one hand is not good manners, "especially while eating with elders."

The article does not say which side the rice or soup goes on. Chapter 1's table gave the individual bowls (rice, soup) and the shared dishes in the middle. Chapter 5 adds, from the guk article, that the soup is served to the right of the rice. Any further placement is not in my sources, so follow what you are shown if you eat with Korean friends.

> **HOT POT, SCORCHING AND COOKED RICE**
>
> **Scorching:** a crust is wanted at the bottom, but burnt rice smells acrid; keep the heat low for the last stage and never leave the pot.
> **Cooked rice:** general food-safety advice (mine, not from the articles): cool leftover rice quickly, keep it in the fridge, eat it within a day and reheat until steaming hot all the way through.
> **Steam and hot water:** lift the lid away from you.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · THE STAPLE

Plain short-grain rice in a pot

10 minutes active | 30 minutes soaking | 2 portions | cooking rice without a cooker

Use short-grain (sushi or Korean) rice, which the course assumes throughout. Measure by volume with a mug or cup.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

1 cup	short-grain rice
1 cup	water, plus 2 tbsp (my starting ratio; see the experiment)

1. Put the rice in the pot. Cover with cold water, swirl, tip off the cloudy water. Repeat several times until it runs less cloudy.
2. Add the cooking water and leave to soak for 30 minutes.
3. Put the lid on and bring to the boil over medium-high heat, stirring once or twice; the article says about ten minutes.
4. Turn the heat to low and simmer, lid on, for five to ten minutes.
5. Turn the heat off and leave covered for about 5 minutes (my step). Fluff gently with a spoon and taste a grain: it should be tender with a little bite.

If the rice is hard add a splash of water, cover and steam on the lowest heat a few minutes. *If mushy*, use less water next time. For one portion use half a cup of rice in a small pot, and expect the timings to shift.

> **TASTING NOTE**
>
> Write down the texture: sticky, loose, firm, soft. This is your reference for every later chapter.

LEVEL 1 · USING THE CRUST

Nurungji and a cup of rice tea

15 minutes | 2 portions | controlling the heat at the bottom of the pot

Cook the rice as above, but in the last stage, once the water has gone, leave the pot on low heat for an extra few minutes so a thin crust forms (my timing; start with 3 to 5 minutes and look).

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

1 cup	short-grain rice, cooked as above in a heavy-based pot
2 cups	hot water, for the tea

1. Spoon the loose rice out into bowls, leaving the crust in the pot.
2. Option 1, snack: lift out pieces of the crisp crust and eat them with a pinch of salt.
3. Option 2, rice tea: pour about 2 cups of hot water on the crust, simmer gently for a few minutes (mine), and drink it after the meal, as the article describes for "after meal rice tea".

If the crust sticks hard, soak the pot in hot water before scrubbing; do not scrape it dry.

Setting the table

Put a bowl of rice and a bowl of soup (a soup recipe arrives in Chapter 5, so use a bowl of the rice tea from the second recipe for now) and a spoon and chopsticks for each person, with the ssamjang from Chapter 1 and some cucumber in the middle to share. Lay the spoon beside the rice, never stand the chopsticks upright in the rice, and use the spoon for rice and soup.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · SOAKING

Cook two small batches (half a cup each): one soaked for 30 minutes and one not soaked at all, with the same water and heat. Compare the texture and cooking time.

EXPERIMENT 2 · WATER

Cook three batches with the water at 1 cup, 1 cup plus 2 tbsp and 1 cup plus 4 tbsp for each cup of rice. Which gives the texture you want? Write down your own ratio for your pot.

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Explain the method for cooking rice in a pot as the bap article describes it, say which parts were tagged "citation needed", and say what the article does not give.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Name five kinds of bap from the table and say what makes each different. Then say which you would try first and what you would add to make it a meal.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Cook the rice, form a crust and make the rice tea. Then write down your water ratio, how long the crust took, and the table manners from the sujeo article that you followed.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

The Wikipedia article on Korean table etiquette returned an error, so I know nothing from it. The bap article does not cover eating customs, and the nurungji article says nothing on how sungnyung is made. I did not read the last 20,000 characters of the nurungji page. Dolsot bibimbap appears in the bibimbap article with a rice crust of nurungji, which I leave for Chapter 7. I give no source for rice varieties on sale in the UK.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Method:** rinse, soak about 30 minutes, medium-high with lid about 10 minutes, then low 5 to 10 minutes
- **Mine, untested:** 1 cup rice to about 1 cup plus 2 tbsp water; rest 5 minutes
- **Nurungji:** scorched crust, eaten crisp or boiled in water as rice tea
- **Sujeo:** metal chopsticks and spoon; do not stand chopsticks in rice
- **Leftover rice:** cool quickly, fridge, reheat hot (general advice)

Next chapter: Banchan, small side dishes to eat with the rice.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 3 · Banchan

SKILL GOAL

Make four small side dishes, a blanched-and-seasoned vegetable, a seasoned bean sprout, a simmered potato and a steamed egg, and put three of them on the table with rice.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on namul (the lead, preparation and varieties), soybean sprout (the lead and the Korea section), jorim (the lead and varieties) and gyeran-jjim (preparation), plus what Chapter 1 took from the banchan article. **None of the four articles gives any quantities or times except a 15-minute cooking time in the gyeran-jjim box, so every quantity and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** The namul article does not mention garlic and the soybean sprout article does not give a muchim recipe, so those seasonings are mine. Food-safety notes on sprouts and eggs are general advice of mine.

The basics

Chapter 1 gave the banchan article's definition: "small side dishes served along with cooked rice", shared from the middle of the table. A set meal is counted in *cheop* (3, 5, 7, 9 or 12), and kimchi is not counted. That means a three-banchan meal is rice, soup, kimchi and three small dishes. This chapter makes three of the families the banchan article listed (*namul*, *jorim* and the steamed *jjim*); kimchi comes in Chapter 4.

Namul

The namul article says namul means "either a variety of edible greens or leaves or seasoned herbal dishes made of them", usually served as banchan with rice. It can use roots, leaves, stems, seeds, sprouts, petals or fruits, and sometimes seaweed or mushrooms. Most are blanched before seasoning, though they can also be raw, boiled, fried, sautéed, fermented, dried or

steamed. The seasonings it lists are salt, vinegar, sesame oil, perilla oil, soy sauce, soup soy sauce, doenjang and gochujang. Its examples include *sigeumchi* (spinach), *kongnamul* (soybean sprout), *gosari* (eastern brakenfern) and *musaengchae* (seasoned raw radish). The article carries a "needs more citations" banner, and its line that winter *boreum namuls* are believed to help one withstand the summer heat is a belief, not a fact.

Kongnamul

The soybean sprout article calls the sprouts "one of the most common and basic ingredients in Korean cuisine"; *kongnamul* names both the sprouts and the seasoned dish. *Kongnamul-muchim* is a side dish "made by seasoning boiled soybean sprouts". The article gives no method, so the one below is mine.

Jorim

The jorim article says jorim are dishes simmered in seasoned broth "until the liquid is absorbed into the ingredients and reduced down", "usually soy sauce-based", sometimes with gochujang or gochugaru added, especially for oily red-fleshed fish. Its list includes *gamja-jorim* (simmered potatoes), *dubu-jorim* (tofu), *jang-jorim* (soy-simmered beef) and *gyeran-jang-jorim* (soy-simmered eggs).

Gyeran-jjim

The article describes it as a "custardy, casserole-like" side dish: eggs are strained and whisked with water until smooth (kelp or anchovy broth can replace the water), seasoned with salted shrimp, salted pollock roe or plain salt, and steamed, double-boiled or cooked over very low heat in an earthenware pot (*ttukbaegi*). Toppings include scallions, chilli and toasted sesame seeds. The infobox lists a cooking time of 15 minutes and no measurements.

HEAT, EGGS AND SPROUTS

Eggs: cook the steamed egg until it is set all the way through; do not eat it runny. Use fresh eggs and wash your hands after handling them.

Soybean sprouts: I cook them through and do not eat them raw (my general food-safety habit, not from the article). Rinse them well.

Spinach water and hot sugar: blanching water and simmering sauce are very hot; drain away from you and do not leave the pan.

Allergens: soy sauce, sesame oil and egg.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · NAMUL

Sigeumchi-namul: seasoned spinach

10 minutes | 2 portions | blanching and seasoning

The article says most namul are blanched before seasoning, with soy sauce and sesame oil among the seasonings. The amounts, the garlic and the squeezing are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

- **200 g** fresh spinach, washed
- **1 tsp** soy sauce
- **1 tsp** toasted sesame oil
- **1 small clove** garlic, grated (optional)
- **1 tsp** toasted sesame seeds

1. Bring a large pan of water to the boil. Add the spinach and push it under for about 30 to 60 seconds, until just wilted.
2. Lift it into a bowl of cold water, then squeeze out as much water as you can with your hands.
3. Loosen the clump and mix with the soy sauce, sesame oil and garlic. Taste: add a few drops more soy if it needs salt.
4. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve at room temperature or cold.

LEVEL 1 · NAMUL

Kongnamul-muchim: seasoned bean sprouts

15 minutes | 2 portions | cooking sprouts through

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

200 g	soybean sprouts, rinsed
2 tbsp	water for the pan
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1 tsp	soy sauce, or a pinch of salt
1	spring onion, sliced
1 pinch	gochugaru (optional)

1. Put the sprouts and water in a pot with a lid. Cook over medium heat with the lid on for about 5 to 6 minutes (my timing) until the sprouts are soft with a little crunch. Do not lift the lid often.
2. Drain and cool for a few minutes.
3. Mix with the sesame oil, soy sauce, spring onion and gochugaru. Taste and adjust.

LEVEL 2 · JORIM

Gamja-jorim: potatoes simmered in soy sauce

30 minutes | 2 portions | reducing a sauce until it clings

The jorim article says the liquid is simmered "until the liquid is absorbed into the ingredients and reduced down". The sugar and the proportions are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	waxy potatoes, peeled and cut into 2 cm pieces
150 ml	water
2 tbsp	soy sauce
1 tbsp	sugar or honey
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1 tsp	toasted sesame seeds

1. Put the potatoes, water, soy sauce and sugar in a pan. Bring to the boil, then turn to a gentle simmer with the lid half on.
2. Cook for about 15 to 20 minutes, stirring now and then, until a knife goes through the potato easily and the liquid has reduced to a glaze.
3. If the sauce is gone before the potato is tender, add a splash of water; if too much remains, cook with the lid off.
4. Stir in the sesame oil off the heat. Sprinkle with seeds.

> **HOT GLAZE**
>
> The sauce is very hot and sticks to skin. Keep your face back when stirring a reduced glaze.

LEVEL 2 · JJIM

Gyeran-jjim: steamed egg

20 minutes | 2 portions | cooking a custard gently

The article describes the method; the amounts and the pan are mine. A small lidded saucepan stands in for the earthenware pot.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

3	eggs
150 ml	water or light broth
1 pinch	salt, or about 1 tsp salted shrimp if you have it
1	spring onion, finely sliced
1 tsp	toasted sesame seeds

1. Beat the eggs with the water and salt until smooth, then pour through a sieve into a small lidded saucepan or ovenproof bowl.
2. Cook over the lowest heat, lid on, for about 10 to 15 minutes without stirring, until the egg is set but still tender. The article's box gives 15 minutes total.
3. Check that it is set all the way through. Top with spring onion and sesame seeds and serve from the pan.

A three-banchan table

Put the cooked rice from Chapter 2, spinach, bean sprouts and potatoes in the middle with the ssamjang from Chapter 1, and serve the steamed egg in a pot beside them. The banchan article says kimchi does not count towards the cheop, so with three dishes you have a three-cheop meal. Eat from the shared dishes with your chopsticks and take small amounts.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · BLANCHING TIME

Blanch spinach for 20 seconds, 45 seconds and 90 seconds. Season each the same way and compare colour, bite and how much water you squeeze out.

EXPERIMENT 2 · EGG AND WATER

Make three small steamed eggs with 1 egg to 30 ml, 50 ml and 70 ml of water. Which is closest to the article's "light and fluffy"? Note how the set changes.

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Explain what a banchan is and name four banchan families from the articles, with one example and a seasoning for each.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Cook the potato jorim and describe the stages of the sauce (thin, reducing, glaze). Say what you would change if the potatoes were still hard when the liquid ran out.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Plan and cook a three-banchan meal with rice, using one namul, one jorim or jjim, and one other dish. Write down the order you cooked in and which dishes can be served cold.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

None of the four articles gives amounts, so all measures, the garlic, the sugar, the pan sizes and the sprout cooking time are mine. I did not read the soybean sprout article's other sections beyond a skim of its history, the namul article's references, or the whole of the jorim and gyeran-jjim pages beyond

the parts named. I did not cover bokkeum (stir-fried), musaengchae or the pancakes (jeon) the banchan article lists; the pancakes come in Chapter 8. The article says nothing about keeping banchan in the fridge, so I give no storage times.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Namul:** usually blanched, then seasoned with salt, sesame oil, soy sauce and others
- **Kongnamul-muchim:** seasoned boiled soybean sprouts; cook them through
- **Jorim:** simmered in seasoned broth until absorbed and reduced; usually soy-based
- **Gyeran-jjim:** strained eggs whisked with water or broth, cooked gently; article time 15 minutes
- **Counting:** 3, 5, 7, 9 or 12 cheop; kimchi not counted
- **Mine, untested:** all quantities and times

Next chapter: Kimchi and Fermentation.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 4 · Kimchi and Fermentation

SKILL GOAL

Salt vegetables, mix a kimchi paste, ferment a small jar safely, and taste it as it changes day by day.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on kimchi (the first 100,000 of about 203,000 characters), kkakdugi (lead, origin, preparation, pairings) and kimjang (lead, background, process). **The articles give almost no home-scale quantities, so every weight, volume and time in the recipes is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook, and I have not made kimchi.** Fermentation involves safety judgments I cannot make for you. The safety notes below that are not from the articles are marked as general advice of mine. Compare what you see, smell and taste with a trusted cookbook or a Korean cook if you can.

The basics

The kimchi article calls kimchi "a traditional Korean side dish of salted, fermented vegetables", most often napa cabbage or Korean radish, and says it is "eaten as a side dish with almost every Korean meal". The article says there are over 180 recognised varieties, and gives these among them:

NAME	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS
Baechu-kimchi	Spicy napa cabbage kimchi, made from whole leaves with a filling (*sok*) between salted layers
Kkakdugi	Cubed Korean radish, strongly scented, often with fermented shrimp
Dongchimi	Non-spicy, watery radish kimchi
Baek-kimchi	White kimchi, no chilli
Oi-sobagi	Stuffed cucumber

NAME	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS
Pa-kimchi	Green onion

Salting

The article says to cut the vegetables into small uniform pieces to increase surface area, coat them with salt to draw out water, drain, then add the seasonings. It gives two ways: "5–7% salt for 12 hours or 15% salt for 3–7 hours". It does not say whether those are brine strengths or salt by weight of vegetable, and I did not check, so the first recipe uses my own simpler salting. Cabbage for spicy kimchi is "usually marinated twice" according to a caption. It says brining salt is coarser than kitchen salt.

Seasoning

The listed seasonings are gochugaru, scallions, garlic, ginger and *jeotgal* (salted seafood: salted shrimp, anchovy and fish sauces, with the amount varying by region). Sugar "can be added to bind remaining water". Kkakdugi, per its own article, is flavoured with salt, red chilli powder, spring onions and ginger and often has fermented shrimp.

Fermentation

- **Packing and time.** The kimchi article says to pack into airtight jars and ferment at room temperature for "24 to 48 hours", with about 3% salt "ideal" during fermentation. The kkakdugi article instead says fermentation takes about two weeks in a cool, dry place. The two figures differ, and neither says how sour the result is, so I put both in the experiments and resolve nothing.
- **Gas.** Fermentation makes carbon dioxide, and the article says to release the gas daily.
- **Bacteria.** The vegetables supply the lactic acid bacteria, so no starter is needed. *Leuconostoc* dominates early, *Lactobacillus* and *Weissella* later as acidity rises. The article says these bacteria prefer about 10 °C and that higher temperatures speed acidification.
- **Safety numbers.** A Canadian guidance figure for commercial production is a final pH of 4.2 to 4.5, and the pH 4.6 threshold relates to botulism toxin, which is not produced below it. Home cooks cannot rely on this without a pH meter; I do not give a pass/fail test.
- **Spoilage.** The article says some yeasts cause white colonies, spoilage and off-flavours.

Kimjang and storage

The kimjang article describes it as the traditional winter preparation of kimchi, beginning in the tenth month and running for about a month, with groups gathering to cut, wash and salt the vegetables. It lists earthenware jars buried up to their necks (fermentation stops below 0 °C and resumes in spring); today many city residents use balconies or dedicated kimchi refrigerators. It was inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in December 2013. Its dates and recipes are cited from sources between 1962 and 2007, and one citation is flagged for an error, so treat specific dates with caution; it says recipes go back "at least" to the 13th century and red pepper was added in the 17th. Chapter 1 already noted that the Korean cuisine article does not reconcile the kimchi origin claims.

FERMENTATION SAFETY, JARS AND CHILLI

Gas: release the gas daily, as the article says, and do not fill a jar to the top (mine: leave a few centimetres of space). A sealed jar can build pressure; open it slowly over the sink.
Clean equipment (general advice, mine): wash the jar and lid in hot soapy water, keep the vegetables pressed under their own liquid, and use clean hands or utensils.
When to throw it away (general advice, mine): if you see fuzzy mould, or it smells rotten and not sour, discard the whole jar; do not scrape and eat. The article's white colonies from yeasts are not mould, but I cannot tell the two apart for you, so when unsure, throw it out.
Allergens: fish sauce and salted shrimp (fish, shellfish); you can leave them out or use a vegetarian substitute, but the flavour will differ.
Chilli: wear gloves when mixing gochugaru paste into the vegetables; wash your hands before touching your eyes.

Try it

LEVEL 2 · FIRST FERMENT

Kkakdugi: small-batch radish kimchi

30 minutes | 1 jar, about 4 portions | salting, seasoning, packing a jar

Radish is the easiest place to start because it needs no leaf-by-leaf stuffing. In the article the cubes are flavoured with salt, red chilli powder, spring onions and ginger; the garlic, sugar and quantities are mine.

INGREDIENTS (1 JAR OF ABOUT 700 ML)

500 g	mooli (daikon) or Korean radish, peeled, cut into 2 cm cubes
1 tbsp	fine salt (about 15 g)
1 tsp	sugar
2 tbsp	gochugaru
1 small clove	garlic, grated
1 tsp	grated ginger
2	spring onions, sliced
1 tbsp	fish sauce, or a pinch more salt

1. Toss the cubes with the salt and sugar in a bowl and leave for about 30 minutes (mine), stirring once, until they release liquid.
2. Drain, keeping a few spoonfuls of the liquid. Taste a cube: it should be salty but not unpleasant.
3. Wearing gloves, mix in the gochugaru, garlic, ginger, spring onions and fish sauce until every cube is coated and red.
4. Pack tightly into a clean jar, pressing so the liquid rises. Add a spoon of the saved liquid if dry. Leave 3 to 4 cm of space at the top.
5. Close the lid loosely (or use a lid that lets gas out). Leave at cool room temperature and taste a cube each day. Open the jar daily to release gas.
6. When it tastes pleasantly tangy (the articles give 24 to 48 hours at room temperature for kimchi, and about two weeks in a cool place for kkakdugi), move it to the fridge.

LEVEL 3 · CLASSIC

Baechu-kimchi: napa cabbage, small batch

1 hour active | overnight salting | about 4 portions | salting leaves and stuffing them

This follows the article's description (cut, salt, drain, fill between leaves). The amounts are mine; I did not check them against a cookbook, and the 5 to 7 percent figure from the article is my reading of a brine strength, which I could not verify.

INGREDIENTS (1 JAR OF ABOUT 1 LITRE)

1	napa (Chinese) cabbage, about 600 g, quartered lengthways
60 g	coarse salt, dissolved in 1 litre of water (about a 6% brine, mine)
3 tbsp	gochugaru
2 cloves	garlic, grated
1 tsp	grated ginger
1 tbsp	fish sauce
1 tsp	sugar
3	spring onions, cut in 3 cm lengths
1 small	carrot or 50 g mooli, in thin matchsticks

1. Soak the cabbage quarters in the brine, pressing them down with a plate, for about 6 hours or overnight (mine), turning once. They should bend without snapping.
2. Rinse well under cold water and drain cut-side down for about 30 minutes. Squeeze gently.
3. Mix the gochugaru, garlic, ginger, fish sauce, sugar, spring onions and carrot into a paste, wearing gloves. Add a splash of water if too thick.
4. Rub a little paste between every layer of leaves and over the outside. Fold each quarter and pack into a clean jar, pressing down. Leave a few centimetres of space.
5. Ferment and taste as in the radish recipe, opening daily to release gas, and refrigerate when it tastes right to you.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · TIME

Split the radish kimchi into two small jars. Refrigerate one after 1 day at room temperature, and the other after 3 days. After another week, compare the sourness, fizz and crunch. Write down what you found.

EXPERIMENT 2 · THE TWO ARTICLES

The kimchi article says 24 to 48 hours; the kkakdugi article says about two weeks in a cool place. Keep a third jar of radish in the coolest place you have (not the fridge) and taste it every few days. Note when it tastes best to you and what temperature the room was.

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Describe how kimchi is made from the articles: the salting, the seasonings, the fermentation and the role of bacteria. Name three kinds of kimchi.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Make the radish kimchi and keep a daily log for a week: smell, taste, fizz, texture. Say when you put it in the fridge and why.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

The two articles give different fermentation times. State both, say what each does not tell you, and explain how you would decide for your own kitchen without claiming either is wrong.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

I did not read the last half of the kimchi article, so history, regional types, health studies and the rest are not covered. The kimchi article's figures disagree in places (a 2020 versus 2021 consumption figure), and its nutrition and health material is hedged or tagged, so I left both out. I could not check whether the salting figures are brine strengths or percentages by weight. I have no source for how long kimchi keeps in a fridge or for UK shopping (napa cabbage is sold as Chinese leaf, which is my belief and unverified). Kimchi does not come from a recipe I tested, and this is the chapter where an untested quantity matters most, so cross-check it.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Kimchi:** salted, fermented vegetables, most often napa cabbage or Korean radish
- **Method (articles):** cut small, salt, drain, add seasonings, pack in airtight jars, release gas daily
- **Times:** 24 to 48 hours at room temperature (kimchi); about two weeks in a cool place (kkakdugi); the two do not agree
- **Seasonings:** gochugaru, scallions, garlic, ginger, jeotgal; sugar can be added
- **Mine, untested:** all weights, volumes, salting times and the 6% brine
- **Discard:** fuzzy mould or a rotten smell (general advice)

Next chapter: Jjigae and Guk, the stews and soups that use kimchi and the pastes from Chapter 1.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 5 · Jjigae and Guk

SKILL GOAL

Make a light soup and two stews: build a broth, add a paste, and know when to add each ingredient.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on jjigae (lead and varieties), kimchi-jjigae, doenjang-jjigae (lead, ingredients, preparation) and guk (lead, types, ingredients, gukbap). **None of the four gives quantities, and only the guk article gives any time (more than 10 hours for seolleongtang, which this chapter does not cook), so every weight, volume and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** The jjigae article says nothing about broth bases or the stone pot, so I used the doenjang-jjigae and kimchi-jjigae articles for those. Safety notes on pork and hot pots are general advice of mine.

The basics

Guk and tang

The guk article describes guk as a category of Korean soups, a basic part of the meal served with rice and side dishes. It says guk "tends" to be lighter and that *tang* is often used interchangeably, with tang "sometimes" a little thicker, though lighter vegetable soups usually take the *-guk* ending and heavier soups with more solids are often called tang. Its types:

TYPE	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS
Malgeun jangguk	Clear soups seasoned with doenjang or soy sauce
Gomguk	Long-simmered beef or bone broth, with a "milky color"; seolleongtang is simmered "for more than 10 hours"
Tojangguk	Based on doenjang and rice-washing water

TYPE	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS
Naengguk	Cold soups, mainly eaten in summer

Examples it names: *miyeok-guk* (wakame seaweed soup), *kongnamul-guk* (soybean sprout soup) and *tteokguk* (rice cake soup). The article says guk is "served on the right side of" the rice, which answers the question left open in Chapter 2: with the bowls laid out for one person, the soup goes to the right of the rice. Its health claims are given as beliefs or traditions, and it carries a "needs more citations" tag.

Jjigae

The jjigae article calls jjigae Korean stews, "typically" made with meat, seafood or vegetables in a broth and often served communally. It contrasts them with *jeongol*: jjigae has less liquid (roughly half solid ingredients) and stronger seasoning. The flavourings it lists are gochujang, doenjang, ganjang and salted fermented shrimp (*saeu-jeot*). Its named types include kimchi-jjigae, doenjang-jjigae, sundubu-jjigae (uncurdled soft tofu) and budae-jjigae. In Joseon times it was called *jochi*. It says Korean meals usually include either a jjigae or a guk, while the Chapter 1 sources describe both appearing in a full meal, and I do not reconcile them.

The jjigae article says nothing about the stone pot (*ttukbaegi*); the kimchi-jjigae article says the stew is usually served boiling hot in a stone pot.

Doenjang-jjigae

The article describes it as a stew built on doenjang, "claimed as a national dish" (a claim, not a fact). Core ingredients: doenjang, dried anchovies, white radish, Korean chilli, garlic, onion, green onion, potato, courgette (zucchini) and medium-firm tofu, with seafood or beef as add-ins. The method is: "The base broth is made by boiling dried anchovies and white radishes", then doenjang and chilli are added and simmered, the anchovies are removed, and the other ingredients are added. It says the stew is thicker than doenjang-guk, a point tagged "citation needed".

Kimchi-jjigae

The article calls it "one of the most common stews in Korean cuisine". It is often made with older kimchi, which "tastes stronger and has more probiotics" per the article, and it says the live bacteria in fresh kimchi do not survive cooking. Typical additions: pork, diced tofu, spring

onions, garlic and onions, stewed in water or anchovy stock and seasoned with doenjang or gochujang, served communally with banchan and rice. I make no health claim about probiotics.

HOT STEW, PORK AND THE STONE POT

Boiling: a jjigae is served boiling hot. Let it cool a few minutes before eating, and lift lids away from you.

Pork: slice thinly and cook until no pink remains and it is steaming hot all the way through (general advice, mine).

Stone pot: a *ttukbaegi* can crack if heated empty or put from a cold surface onto strong heat; follow the maker's directions or use an ordinary saucepan (general advice, mine).

Allergens: soy (doenjang, soy sauce, tofu), fish (dried anchovies, fish sauce), shellfish (salted shrimp) and sesame.

Chilli: wash your hands after cutting fresh chilli.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · SOUP

Kongnamul-guk: soybean sprout soup

20 minutes | 2 portions | simple clear broth

The guk article names kongnamul-guk but gives no method. This one is mine and is the simplest soup in the course.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

150 g	soybean sprouts, rinsed
600 ml	water
1 clove	garlic, minced
1 tsp	soy sauce, plus salt to taste
1	spring onion, sliced
1 pinch	gochugaru (optional)

1. Put the sprouts and water in a pot with the lid on and bring to the boil over medium heat. Keep the lid on and simmer for about 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and soy sauce, and simmer for 3 minutes more.
3. Season with salt, add the spring onion and gochugaru and serve in a bowl on the right of the rice.

LEVEL 2 · STEW

Doenjang-jjigae

35 minutes | 2 portions | building a broth and adding doenjang

The order follows the article: anchovy and radish broth, then doenjang and chilli, remove the anchovies, add the rest. The amounts are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

8	dried anchovies, heads and guts removed (mine)
100 g	mooli (white radish), cut into thin squares
500 ml	water
1.5 tbsp	doenjang
1	green chilli, sliced (or a pinch of gochugaru)
1 clove	garlic, minced
1/2	onion, sliced
1 small	potato, cubed
1/2	courgette, sliced
150 g	medium-firm tofu, cubed
1	spring onion, sliced

1. Put the anchovies, radish and water in a pot, bring to the boil, and simmer for about 10 minutes.
2. Stir in the doenjang, loosening it in the broth with a spoon (a sieve helps). Add the chilli and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Lift out the anchovies.
4. Add the garlic, onion and potato; simmer for about 8 minutes until the potato is nearly tender.
5. Add the courgette and tofu; simmer 3 to 4 minutes. Taste and add water if too salty.
6. Scatter with spring onion and serve in the middle of the table to share, with rice.

LEVEL 2 · STEW

Kimchi-jjigae

35 minutes | 2 portions | cooking sour kimchi into a stew

Use the kimchi from Chapter 4 after it has fermented a while: the article says older kimchi is typical. Amounts and the pork cut are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

200 g	sour kimchi, cut into bite-sized pieces, plus 2 tbsp of its juice
150 g	pork belly or shoulder, thinly sliced
400 ml	water or anchovy stock
150 g	medium-firm tofu, cubed
1 clove	garlic, minced
1 tsp	gochujang, or 1 tsp doenjang
1	spring onion, sliced

1. Put the pork, kimchi, kimchi juice and garlic in a pot and fry over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring.
2. Add the water or stock and the gochujang. Bring to the boil, then simmer, partly covered, for about 15 minutes.
3. Add the tofu and simmer 5 minutes more. Check the pork is cooked all the way through. Taste: add water if too sour or salty.
4. Scatter with spring onion and serve in the pot with rice.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · FRESH AGAINST AGED KIMCHI

Make two small kimchi-jjigae, one with kimchi 1 day old and one with kimchi 2 weeks old (or from a shop jar). Compare the sourness and depth. The article says older kimchi gives a stronger taste.

EXPERIMENT 2 · HOW MUCH DOENJANG

Make three bowls of the doenjang broth with 1 tbsp, 1.5 tbsp and 2 tbsp of paste for 500 ml of water. At which point does it taste right, and what changes as you add more?

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Explain the difference between jjigae and jeongol and how guk and tang are described. Where does the soup go on the table?

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Cook the doenjang-jjigae and write down the order of the steps and why the anchovies are removed (use only what the article says, then say what you guess).

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Plan a meal for two with rice, one soup, one stew and one banchan from Chapter 3. Write the cooking order and say which dishes you serve in the middle and which to each person.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

The jjigae article gives no broth bases, no vessel and no comparison with guk, and none of the four articles gives any quantities. I did not cook or taste any of this. I did not cover sundubu-jjigae, budae-jjigae, seolleongtang or tteokguk, which the articles only name. The article for doenjang-jjigae says nothing about why the anchovies are removed, so my reason is a guess. The articles do not say how long leftover stew keeps, and I give no storage advice.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Guk / tang:** soups, interchangeable in the article; tang "sometimes" thicker; guk goes to the right of the rice
- **Jjigae:** stew with about half solids and stronger seasoning; often shared
- **Doenjang-jjigae:** anchovy and radish broth, then doenjang and chilli, remove anchovies, add the rest
- **Kimchi-jjigae:** older kimchi, pork, tofu, seasoned with doenjang or gochujang
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts and times

Next chapter: Grill and Marinade.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 6 · Grill and Marinade

SKILL GOAL

Make a marinade, cook thin slices of meat in a hot pan, and eat them as lettuce wraps with ssamjang and kimchi.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on bulgogi (lead, etymology, history, preparation, variations), galbi (introduction through "Grilling and serving"), samgyeopsal (lead, preparation, consumption) and dak-galbi (lead, infobox, history and regional characteristics). **None of the four articles gives marinade quantities or cooking times, so every weight, volume and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** The dak-galbi article has no recipe at all, so my version of it is mine from start to finish. Food-safety notes on raw meat and marinade are general advice of mine.

The basics

The course so far has made the parts of a meal that sit around the middle of the table. Grilled meat is the dish at the centre. The galbi and samgyeopsal articles describe diners cooking the meat themselves on a tabletop grill and cutting it with scissors; at home most people will use a heavy frying pan or griddle pan, as the bulgogi article says home cooks do.

DISH	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS	MARINATED?
Bulgogi	"Thin, marinated slices of meat, most commonly beef, grilled on a barbecue or on a stove-top griddle"; home cooks often stir-fry it in a pan	Yes; usually under an hour, some chefs say overnight
Galbi	Grilled beef short ribs (or pork ribs when named so); beef usually scored first	Yes (soy-based; pork may be gochujang-based); unmarinated versions exist (*saeng-galbi*)

DISH	WHAT THE ARTICLE SAYS	MARINATED?
Samgyeopsal	Thick pork belly slices, "three-layer meat", grilled at the table	"Usually neither marinated nor seasoned"
Dak-galbi	Stir-fried marinated diced chicken in a gochujang sauce, from Chuncheon	Yes, but the article does not say with what

The bulgogi marinade

The bulgogi article gives the base as soy sauce, sugar, sesame oil, garlic and ground black pepper. Cooks "often" add scallion, ginger, onion, chilli or mushrooms, and pureed pear, pineapple, kiwi or onion are used as tenderisers and flavour enhancers. Corn syrup or honey can replace or add to the sugar, and the article says recipes vary by chef and by family. Sirloin is a common cut, with other prime cuts acceptable and ribeye valued for tenderness; chicken and pork versions are common. It lists grilled garlic, sliced onion and green pepper cooked alongside. It carries a "needs more citations" banner, and its history ("believed to have originated" in the Goguryeo era, when it was called *maekjeok*) is hedged.

The galbi marinade

For beef, the galbi article lists soy sauce, sugar, garlic, scallions, ginger juice, black pepper, sesame and sesame oil, with Korean pear juice sometimes brushed on, and *cheongju* (rice wine) usually added to both beef and pork marinades "to reduce porky smell" for pork. Pork marinades are soy-based or gochujang-based, the latter spicy. Pork shoulder slices are "around 2.5 centimetres (1 inch) in width". The meat cooks "for a short time" over medium-high heat and leftover marinade is brushed on as a glaze. The article offers several competing theories for how "LA galbi" began and settles none.

Samgyeopsal

The samgyeopsal article says thick fatty slices are grilled on a slanted griddle or gridiron, the meat is "neither marinated nor seasoned" in the usual case, and garlic, onions, chillies, mushrooms and kimchi are grilled in the pork fat. It is eaten as *ssam*: meat on lettuce or pickled leaves with ssamjang, rolled and "eaten in one mouthful", with raw garlic (sliced garlic the most popular), kimchi, perilla leaves, pickled radish and a dip of sesame oil, salt and black pepper. It calls the belief that samgyeopsal protects against air pollution a myth, and I make no health claims about any dish here. It tags one survey result as possibly unreliable, so I leave out the percentage.

Dak-galbi

The dak-galbi article describes marinated diced chicken cooked in a gochujang-based sauce with sweet potatoes, cabbage, perilla, spring onion and rice cake (*tteok*), on a hot plate built into the table in restaurants, with lettuce and perilla leaves as wraps. The "galbi" in the name is because chicken replaced pork ribs when pork ran out; there are no ribs in it. It gives no marinade ingredients, so the recipe below is my own.

RAW MEAT, MARINADE AND HOT PANS

Cook through: chicken and pork must be cooked until no pink remains and the juices run clear. Beef slices cooked thin should be hot through. This is general advice, mine.

Raw marinade: do not brush leftover marinade onto cooked meat or serve it as a sauce unless you boil it for a few minutes first (general advice, mine). The galbi article describes glazing with leftover marinade, and I follow it only with that boiling step.

Keep raw meat separate: use a separate board and wash your hands after handling raw meat; marinate in the fridge, not on the worktop.

Fruit tenderisers: pear, kiwi and pineapple all soften meat; if the marinade has kiwi or pineapple, I would keep it short, because I have read that long marinating can make meat mushy. That is my belief and unverified.

Hot oil and smoke: a very hot pan spits fat and makes smoke; open a window and use a lid or splash guard.

Allergens: soy, sesame, wheat in some soy sauces, and (for dak-galbi) the gochujang.

Try it

LEVEL 2 · MARINADE

Bulgogi, pan-cooked

20 minutes plus 30 minutes marinating | 2 portions | marinating and quick-frying thin slices

The marinade follows the article's base and optional additions; the amounts are mine. Ask the butcher for thinly sliced sirloin or ribeye, or freeze the steak for about an hour first so it is easy to slice thinly (my tip).

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	beef sirloin or ribeye, sliced very thinly
3 tbsp	soy sauce
1 tbsp	sugar or honey
1 tbsp	toasted sesame oil
2 cloves	garlic, grated
3 tbsp	grated pear (or grated onion)
1 pinch	black pepper
2	spring onions, sliced
1 tbsp	cooking oil for the pan
1/2	onion, sliced

1. Mix the soy sauce, sugar, sesame oil, garlic, pear and pepper. Add the beef and spring onions and mix well. Cover and marinate in the fridge for about 30 minutes (the article says usually under an hour).
2. Heat a large heavy pan until very hot and add the oil. Fry the onion for 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Add the beef in small batches so the pan stays hot, and fry 1 to 2 minutes per batch, until browned and cooked through. Do not crowd the pan.
4. Serve straight away, with rice and the Chapter 1 ssamjang, lettuce and kimchi on the side.

LEVEL 2 · UNSEASONED

Samgyeopsal-style pork belly and lettuce wraps

25 minutes | 2 portions | rendering fat, then wrapping

The article describes the meat as neither marinated nor seasoned, grilled at the table and eaten in ssam. In a pan at home I use pork belly slices about 5 mm thick, thinner than a restaurant would, so they cook through (mine).

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	pork belly, sliced about 5 mm thick, skin off
6-8	large lettuce leaves
4 cloves	garlic, sliced thinly
1	small onion, cut into wedges
2 tbsp	ssamjang (Chapter 1)
1 tbsp	sesame oil, 1 pinch salt and 1 pinch black pepper, mixed, for dipping
100 g	kimchi

1. Heat a heavy frying pan over medium-high heat with no oil. Add the pork in a single layer.
2. Cook 2 to 3 minutes a side, until browned and the fat is rendered. Cook through; no pink.
3. Fry the garlic, onion and a few pieces of kimchi in the fat for the last few minutes.
4. Cut the pork into bite-size pieces with kitchen scissors. Put a piece on a lettuce leaf with ssamjang and garlic, fold and eat in one bite. Dip some in the sesame oil and salt.

LEVEL 3 · SPICY

Dak-galbi: spicy chicken stir-fry (my version)

30 minutes plus marinating | 2 portions | a gochujang sauce that clings

The article gives no marinade or method. This is a plausible home version from the ingredients it names. Treat it as an experiment, not the traditional dish.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	chicken thigh, diced
2 tbsp	gochujang
1 tbsp	soy sauce
1 tbsp	sugar or honey
2 cloves	garlic, grated
200 g	cabbage, in chunks
1 small	sweet potato, thinly sliced
2	spring onions, cut in 3 cm pieces
1 tbsp	cooking oil

1. Mix the gochujang, soy sauce, sugar and garlic. Coat the chicken and leave in the fridge for 30 minutes.
2. Heat the oil in a wide pan. Add the sweet potato and a splash of water, lid on, 5 minutes.
3. Add the chicken and cabbage and stir-fry over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through with no pink. Add a spoon of water if it catches.
4. Add the spring onions for the last minute. Serve with rice and lettuce leaves for wrapping.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · MARINATING TIME

Marinate three portions of the bulgogi beef for 15 minutes, 1 hour and overnight (in the fridge). Cook each the same way. Compare tenderness, saltiness and flavour.

EXPERIMENT 2 · THE TENDERISER

Make the bulgogi marinade with grated pear, with grated onion and with neither. Marinate each for 30 minutes. Does the meat feel different?

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Compare bulgogi, galbi and samgyeopsal: cut, marinated or not, and how each is cooked and eaten according to the articles.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Cook the bulgogi and the pork, and write a tasting note for each. State which marinade ingredient you could taste and which you could not.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Plan a Korean barbecue night for two using the dishes from Chapters 1 to 6. Say what goes in the middle, what each person gets, and the order of cooking.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

No article gives marinade amounts or cooking times; the dak-galbi article has no method and no marinade ingredients. I did not read the later sections of galbi (after "Grilling and serving"), and I skipped regional variants beyond the names. I do not cover galbi itself as a recipe, as short ribs need

more detail than the article gave. The bulgogi article's 150 kcal per 150 g figure is flagged as needing a check, so I left it out. I cannot tell you what a UK butcher calls these cuts.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Bulgogi marinade (article):** soy sauce, sugar, sesame oil, garlic, black pepper; often scallion, ginger, onion, pear
- **Marinating time:** usually under an hour; some say overnight
- **Samgyeopsal:** usually neither marinated nor seasoned; eaten as ssam
- **Ssam:** lettuce, ssamjang, garlic, kimchi, in one mouthful
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts and times, and the dak-galbi recipe
- **Always:** cook pork and chicken through; boil leftover marinade before using it as a sauce

Next chapter: Bowls and Noodles.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 7 · Bowls and Noodles

SKILL GOAL

Turn the parts you can already make into one-bowl meals: a rice bowl with toppings, stir-fried glass noodles, and cold noodles in a spicy sauce.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on bibimbap (lead, preparation, variations; the last 4,871 characters were not read), japchae (lead, etymology and history, ingredients and preparation, varieties), janchi-guksu (lead, history, popular culture) and bibim-guksu (lead, name, flavour, ingredients). **No article gives quantities or cooking times (bibimbap says only that a dolsot version sizzles "for minutes"), so every weight, volume and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** Sauce proportions and the order of cooking are mine. Food-safety notes are general advice of mine.

The basics

Bibimbap

The article's lead describes warm white rice topped with namul (here "sautéed or blanched seasoned vegetables"), usually egg and sliced meat, usually beef, plus gochujang. It lists common vegetables as julienned cucumber, courgette (*aehobak*), radish, mushrooms, bellflower root (*doraji*), seaweed (*gim*), spinach, soybean sprouts and bracken (*gosari*). South Korean versions add sesame oil, gochujang and sesame seeds, and the vegetables are often arranged "so adjacent colors complement each other". Everything is "stirred together thoroughly just before eating."

Variations: **dolsot**, where a raw egg "is cooked against the sides of the bowl" in a very hot stone pot whose base is coated in sesame oil so the rice forms nurungji (Chapter 2); **Jeonju**, rice cooked in beef shank broth with soybean sprouts and seasoned raw beef; **Jinju**, with beef *yukhoe* (beef tartare) and a special paste. The article says "The origin of bibimbap is unknown",

that one theory ties it to mixing offering food from *jesa* rites ("Some scholars assert"), and that the dolsot version is "commonly attributed to" a restaurant in Jeonju.

Japchae

The article calls it "a savory and slightly sweet dish of stir-fried glass noodles and vegetables", a celebration dish and a common banchan, also a main course. The noodles are usually *dangmyeon*, from sweet potato starch: "pale grey, semi-transparent, chewy and elastic". It says each ingredient is cooked separately, then combined with the boiled and drained noodles, "seasoned with soy sauce, sugar, chopped garlic, green onions and sesame oil", and served hot or cold. Typical additions are mushrooms, carrots, spinach, onion, egg and scallions, with beef or pork. The origin it gives (a vegetable and mushroom dish for a palace banquet in the early 17th century) rests on a 2010 newspaper piece, and the noodle timeline on news and tourism sources, so I treat the dates as uncertain.

Cold and warm noodles

Bibim-guksu: "a cold Korean noodle dish made with very thin wheat flour noodles" (*somyeon*), especially in summer. The heat comes from chilli powder, gochujang and garlic, with vinegar and sugar for sweet-and-sour balance and a little sesame oil. Typical toppings: stir-fried diced beef, pickled cucumber strips and mushrooms cooked in sesame oil, with hard-boiled egg, pickled radish, gim and cucumber; Korean pear or tomato "sometimes".

Janchi-guksu (janchi means feast): somyeon noodles in a light anchovy broth, sometimes with kelp (beef broth may be substituted), with a sauce of sesame oil, soy sauce and a little chilli and spring onion, and toppings of fried egg strips, gim and courgette. The article says it is served at weddings and 60th birthdays and the noodles symbolise longevity. I do not give a recipe: its only method detail is broth, noodles and toppings, which Chapter 5 and this chapter already show.

EGGS, NOODLES AND HOT STONE

Raw egg: the dolsot version cooks a raw egg against the hot stone. I fry the egg until the white is fully set instead; if you want a runny yolk, use the freshest eggs and accept the small risk (general advice, mine).
Rice: do not leave cooked rice sitting out; cool and refrigerate leftovers (Chapter 2).
Hot stone pot: a *dolsot* is extremely hot and can crack; I do not give a recipe for it.
Allergens: soy, sesame, wheat (somyeon), egg, gochujang, and fish if you add anchovy or fish sauce.
Chilli: bibim-guksu sauce can be very hot; start with half the gochujang and gochugaru.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · ASSEMBLY

Bibimbap from the banchan you already made

30 minutes | 2 portions | assembling a bowl

This uses the seasoned spinach and bean sprouts from Chapter 3. Add or swap any vegetable on the article's list.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

2 cups	hot cooked short-grain rice (Chapter 2)
1 portion	sigeumchi-namul (Chapter 3)
1 portion	kongnamul-muchim (Chapter 3)
1/2	cucumber, cut in matchsticks
1 small	carrot, cut in matchsticks
100 g	bulgogi (Chapter 6), cooked and chopped (optional)
2	eggs, fried
2 tbsp	gochujang
2 tsp	toasted sesame oil
2 tsp	toasted sesame seeds

1. Stir-fry the carrot in a splash of oil for 2 minutes (mine). Keep the cucumber raw.
2. Divide the hot rice between two bowls. Arrange the toppings in separate piles around the rice, putting contrasting colours next to each other.
3. Fry the eggs until the white is set. Put one on each bowl.
4. Add a spoon of gochujang and a teaspoon of sesame oil to each, sprinkle with seeds.
5. Stir everything together thoroughly just before eating, as the article says.

LEVEL 2 · STIR-FRY

Japchae

40 minutes | 2 portions | cooking ingredients separately

The article says each ingredient is cooked separately, mixed with the boiled noodles and seasoned with soy sauce, sugar, garlic, spring onion and sesame oil. Amounts and the order are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

100 g	dangmyeon (sweet potato noodles), dried
100 g	spinach
1	carrot, in matchsticks
1/2	onion, sliced
100 g	mushrooms, sliced
100 g	beef or pork, thin strips (optional)
2 tbsp	soy sauce
2 tsp	sugar
2 cloves	garlic, minced
1 tbsp	toasted sesame oil
2	spring onions, sliced
1 tsp	sesame seeds

1. Cook the noodles in boiling water following the packet, then drain and rinse. Cut them a few times with scissors so they are not too long.
2. In a wide pan with a little oil, stir-fry each vegetable separately for 1 to 3 minutes (spinach just until wilted), moving each to a large bowl. If using meat, cook it through.
3. Mix the soy sauce, sugar, garlic and half the sesame oil. Add the noodles to the pan with this seasoning and stir over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Return everything to the pan or bowl, toss, add the spring onions and the rest of the sesame oil. Taste and adjust.

5. Top with sesame seeds. Serve hot or cold.

LEVEL 2 · COLD NOODLES

Bibim-guksu: cold spicy noodles

20 minutes | 2 portions | balancing hot, sweet and sour

The sauce uses the article's list: chilli powder, gochujang, garlic, vinegar, sugar and sesame oil. The proportions are mine, so taste the sauce before it meets the noodles.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

150 g	dried somyeon (thin wheat noodles)
2 tbsp	gochujang
1 tsp	gochugaru
1 clove	garlic, grated
1 tbsp	rice vinegar
2 tsp	sugar
1 tbsp	soy sauce
2 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1/2	cucumber, in matchsticks
2	hard-boiled eggs, halved
1 tsp	sesame seeds

1. Mix all the sauce ingredients (gochujang to sesame oil) in a bowl. Taste a tiny dab; adjust sweetness, sour and heat.
2. Cook the noodles in boiling water for the time on the packet (usually only a few minutes), then drain and rinse under cold water, rubbing gently, until cold. Drain well.
3. Toss the noodles with the sauce. Top with cucumber, egg and sesame seeds, and serve right away.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · MIXED OR NOT

Divide a bibimbap bowl in two. Stir one half as the article says and leave the other unmixed, eating each topping with rice separately. Which tastes better, and why?

EXPERIMENT 2 · SAUCE BALANCE

Make the bibim-guksu sauce three ways: with extra vinegar, with extra sugar and with extra gochujang. Which makes the best balance on the noodles?

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Describe bibimbap, japchae and bibim-guksu in a sentence each from the articles, and name one variation of bibimbap with where it comes from.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Cook the japchae and explain why each ingredient is cooked separately (the article states the method; give the article's reason if it has one, and your own guess if not).

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Plan a leftovers day: use rice, namul, bulgogi and kimchi from earlier chapters for a bibimbap lunch and say what you would add to make it a balanced bowl.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

No article gives quantities or times. The japchae article does not explain why the ingredients are cooked separately; my reason is a guess. The bibimbap article's last 4,871 characters were not read. Janchi-guksu and the Jeonju and Jinju versions are described but not cooked. I did not read about naengmyeon, jajangmyeon, kalguksu or ramyeon, which are not covered in this course. I have no source for UK brands of dangmyeon or somyeon.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Bibimbap:** rice, namul, egg, meat, gochujang, sesame oil; arrange by colour; stir before eating
- **Japchae:** sweet potato noodles, vegetables cooked separately, soy sauce, sugar, garlic, sesame oil
- **Bibim-guksu:** cold thin wheat noodles, chilli, gochujang, garlic, vinegar, sugar, sesame oil
- **Janchi-guksu:** somyeon in anchovy broth, fried egg, gim, courgette; served at weddings
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts, times and sauce proportions

Next chapter: Pancakes, Fried Food and Street Snacks.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 8 · Pancakes, Fried Food and Street Snacks

SKILL GOAL

Pan-fry a crisp scallion pancake with a dipping sauce, simmer rice cakes in a gochujang sauce, and roll a gimbap.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The descriptions come from Wikipedia's articles on jeon (lead and types), pajeon (lead, preparation, type, Dongnae), tteokbokki (lead, history, varieties) and gimbap (lead, ingredients and preparation). **None of the four gives quantities or cooking times; the gimbap article gives only the roll's width, so every weight, volume and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** The jeon article is tagged as needing more citations and has no section on kimchi pancakes or dipping sauce, so those parts are mine or taken from the pajeon article. The articles do not agree on the pajeon batter. Safety notes are general advice of mine.

The basics

Jeon

The jeon article says: "Almost all jeons are seasoned, coated with wheat flour and egg wash, and then pan-fried." Jeon can be an appetiser, a banchan or a drinking snack (*anju*). Its types include *pajeon* (scallions; *haemul-pajeon* with seafood), *gamja-jeon* (shredded potato), *hobak-jeon* (Korean courgette), *yukjeon* (usually pan-fried beef slices), *saengseon-jeon* (white fish), *guljeon* (oysters) and *hwajeon* (a sweet one with edible flowers and often honey). It lists *bindaetteok* (mung bean pancake) as a related dish but does not describe it. The article has nothing on kimchi pancakes.

Pajeon

The pajeon article says the name comes from *pa*, scallion, and the pancake is made by laying scallions side by side on a hot, oiled pan, ladling batter over them, and flipping "once the bottom holds together and turns golden brown". It is usually served with a "slightly sweet

dipping sauce" called *cho ganjang*, typically soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil and other seasonings. It lists beef, pork, kimchi, shellfish and other seafood as the usual additions, and oysters, shrimp, squid and clams for haemul-pajeon. **The article gives two batters that do not agree**: eggs, wheat flour, rice flour and scallions in one passage, and wheat flour, water, doenjang and sugar in another; the Dongnae version uses rice and glutinous rice flour, eggs and gochujang. I do not choose between them. The Dongnae origin is told as a legend ("legend says the people of Dongnae threw scallions" during a battle).

Tteokbokki

The tteokbokki article describes it as "Korean food made from small-sized garae-tteok (long, white, cylinder-shaped rice cakes)", seasoned with gochujang, "often paired with eomuk (fish cakes), boiled eggs, and scallions". A less common non-spicy soy sauce version is *gungjung-tteokbokki*. It describes a dry *gireum* style (soft tteok sticks seasoned with the sauce and stir-fried in oil) and a soupy *gungmul* style made with a kelp-and-anchovy stock. It says wheat-flour cakes became "a common alternative" from the 1950s. The spicy version is "believed first appeared in 1953" from one restaurant anecdote, and the earliest recorded version is in a 19th-century cookbook under an archaic spelling. It is in the category of articles lacking reliable references, and the page says North Korea banned its sale in restaurants in 2024.

Gimbap

The gimbap article calls it "a Korean dish made from bap (cooked rice), vegetables, and optionally, cooked seafood or meat rolled in gim". The rice is "lightly seasoned with salt and sesame oil"; the gim is toasted over low heat; vegetables and meat are seasoned and stir-fried or pan-fried; a thin layer of rice goes on the gim on a bamboo roller (*gimbal*), the fillings go on the rice, and the roll is "typically 3–4 centimetres (1.2–1.6 in) in diameter" before being sliced. Fillings it lists: pickled yellow radish, egg strips, kimchi, bulgogi, spinach and carrot. The line that brown, black or other grains may be used is tagged "citation needed".

HOT OIL, STICKY RICE CAKES AND RAW FILLING

Hot oil: fry pancakes in a shallow layer; never leave the pan, and flip away from you.
Rice cakes: tteok is dense and chewy and hot sauce sticks to skin and mouth; let it cool and cut large pieces down (general advice, mine).
Gimbap fillings: cook egg, meat and vegetables fully before rolling and keep gimbap cold if not eaten within a couple of hours; do not take it on a long journey in warm weather (general advice, mine).
Allergens: wheat flour, egg, soy, sesame, fish (eomuk, anchovy), shellfish (seafood pajeon).

Try it

LEVEL 2 · PANCAKE

Pajeon with cho ganjang

25 minutes | 2 portions | pan-frying a batter pancake

Because the article gives two batters, I use a plain one: flour, a little rice flour, egg and water, with scallions laid in first as the article describes. The amounts are mine. Kimchi pancake is the same batter with chopped kimchi instead of scallions; the articles do not describe it, so that is my variation.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

6-8	spring onions, left whole or cut to the pan's length
100 g	plain flour
2 tbsp	rice flour (or more plain flour)
1	egg
150 ml	cold water
1 pinch	salt
2 tbsp	cooking oil

CHO GANJANG (DIPPING SAUCE)

2 tbsp	soy sauce
1 tbsp	rice vinegar
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1 tsp	sugar, and a pinch of gochugaru (optional)

1. Stir the sauce ingredients together until the sugar dissolves. Taste: adjust vinegar and sugar.
2. Whisk the flours, egg, water and salt into a smooth batter, about as thick as double cream (mine).
3. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a wide non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Lay the spring onions side by side, then pour the batter over so it covers them.
4. Fry 3 to 4 minutes, until the underside is golden and holds together (the article's sign), then flip once. Add the rest of the oil around the edge, press gently, and cook 2 to 3

minutes more until crisp.

5. Cut into squares and serve hot with the dipping sauce.

LEVEL 2 · STREET SNACK

Tteokbokki, soupy style

25 minutes | 2 portions | simmering rice cakes in sauce

The soupy style uses a stock; the article names kelp and anchovy. The sauce amounts are mine. Cylinder rice cakes are sold refrigerated or frozen at Asian shops; the packet may tell you to soak them first, which I follow.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	cylinder rice cakes (garae-tteok)
300 ml	water or anchovy stock
2 tbsp	gochujang
1 tsp	gochugaru
1 tbsp	sugar
1 tbsp	soy sauce
2	hard-boiled eggs
100 g	fish cakes (eomuk), sliced (optional)
2	spring onions, cut in 3 cm lengths

1. If the rice cakes are hard or frozen, soak in warm water for 10 to 20 minutes as the packet says (mine).
2. Mix the water, gochujang, gochugaru, sugar and soy sauce in a pan and bring to the boil.
3. Add the rice cakes and fish cakes and simmer for about 8 to 10 minutes, stirring often, until the rice cakes are soft and the sauce has thickened and clings.
4. Add the eggs and spring onions for the last 2 minutes. Taste and adjust sweet and hot. Let it cool a few minutes before eating.

LEVEL 3 · ROLLING

Gimbap

45 minutes | 2 rolls, about 16 slices | cooking fillings and rolling tightly

This follows the article: rice lightly seasoned with salt and sesame oil, toasted gim, cooked fillings, a thin layer of rice, rolled and sliced. A bamboo sushi mat stands in for the *gimbal*. Amounts are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 ROLLS)

2 cups	cooked short-grain rice (Chapter 2), cooled to warm
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil, with a pinch of salt
2	sheets of gim (nori)
2	eggs, beaten and fried as a thin omelette, cut into strips
1	carrot, matchsticks, stir-fried 2 minutes
100 g	spinach, blanched and seasoned as in Chapter 3
100 g	cooked bulgogi or other cooked filling (optional)
1	strips of pickled yellow radish (optional)

1. Mix the rice with the sesame oil and salt.
2. Toast each gim sheet briefly over low heat in a dry pan, a few seconds a side (the article toasts over low heat).
3. Lay a gim sheet, shiny side down, on the mat. Spread a thin layer of rice over it, leaving 2 cm at the far edge. Wet your fingers to stop sticking.
4. Lay fillings in a line across the middle, in a thin stack. Roll tightly from the near edge, pressing as you go, to a roll about 3 to 4 cm across (the article's width).
5. Brush the top with a few drops of sesame oil. Slice with a sharp wet knife into 2 cm slices.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · THE TWO BATTERS

The pajeon article gives two different batters. Make one with the plain flour, rice flour and egg batter above, and one with flour, water and a small spoon of doenjang and sugar. Compare crispness, colour and taste.

EXPERIMENT 2 · SAUCE

Cook the tteokbokki with the gochujang amount at 1, 2 and 3 tbsp for the same water. Which balance of heat and sweetness do you prefer?

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Describe jeon from the jeon and pajeon articles, name three kinds, and state where the pajeon article contradicts itself.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Make the pajeon and tteokbokki, and write a note on texture, heat and what you would change. Include the batter thickness and how long the underside took to set.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Plan a snack table for a few guests with pajeon, tteokbokki and gimbap: what can be made ahead, what must be served hot, and what to do with the leftovers.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

No article gives amounts or times. The jeon article has no kimchijeon and no dipping sauce; the pajeon article's batters disagree. The tteokbokki article gives no method and is in a category for

articles lacking reliable references. I did not read the history or frozen-gimbap sections of the gimbap article, nor bindaetteok, hotteok, twigim (fried food) or sundae, which the chapter title hints at. Twigim is not covered because I did not read an article on it. I cannot tell you where to buy rice cakes or fish cakes in the UK.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Jeon:** seasoned, coated with wheat flour and egg, pan-fried
- **Pajeon:** scallions laid in the hot oiled pan, batter over, flip when golden; cho ganjang dip
- **Tteokbokki:** cylinder rice cakes in gochujang sauce, with fish cakes, eggs and scallions
- **Gimbap:** rice with salt and sesame oil, toasted gim, cooked fillings, 3-4 cm roll
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts, times and the pancake batter

Next chapter: Sauces, Pastes and Sweet Things.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 9 · Sauces, Pastes and Sweet Things

SKILL GOAL

Taste and balance the table sauces from earlier chapters side by side, then make one Korean sweet, a filled pancake called hotteok.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked The sweets come from Wikipedia's articles on hotteok (lead, preparation, history, nutrition), sikhye (lead, preparation, regional variations, names, effects), hangwa (lead, categories, history, occasions) and yakgwa (lead, infobox, etymology, history, research). The sauces come from what Chapters 1, 7 and 8 already took from their articles. I read no article on sauces as a group. **No article here gives a recipe quantity, and only hotteok's "several hours" rise and sikhye's 62 °C steeping temperature give any number a cook could use, so every weight, volume and time below is my own untested starting point; I cannot cook.** Sikhye and yakgwa are described but not given as recipes: I would be inventing the method. Health claims in these articles are beliefs, and I make none.

The basics

The table sauces so far

Three sauces have appeared already, each from an article that named its ingredients but not the amounts.

SAUCE	WHAT THE SOURCES SAY	CHAPTER
Ssamjang	Doenjang mixed with garlic, sesame oil, "and sometimes gochujang", for leaf wraps	1
Cho ganjang	A "slightly sweet dipping sauce", typically soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil and other seasonings, for pajeon	8

SAUCE	WHAT THE SOURCES SAY	CHAPTER
Bibim-guksu sauce	Chilli powder, gochujang, minced garlic, vinegar, sugar and a little sesame oil	7

Each sauce is a few pastes and seasonings balanced for salty, sweet, sour and hot. That is the skill this chapter practises before the sweets.

Hotteok

The hotteok article calls it a filled pancake and a popular street food in South Korea, "sometimes called hoeddeok". The dough is wheat flour, water, milk, sugar and yeast, and the article says it rises "for several hours" and is stiff. The filling is a sweet mixture that "may include" brown sugar, honey, chopped peanuts, walnuts and cinnamon. Handful-sized balls of dough are filled and put on a greased griddle, and a stainless steel circle with a wooden handle presses each into a large circle as it cooks. It says the dish originated in Qing dynasty China and was spread in Korea by Chinese merchants in the late 19th century, "generally believed", and that during Japanese rule the Japanese called such snacks *Shina pan*. An anecdote in the history section has no citation in the text I read, so I leave it out. It says hotteok is usually eaten in winter and may contain as many as 230 calories because of the sugar.

Sikhye

The sikhye article describes it as "a drink made by fermenting rice with malt to give it a sweet taste", served as a dessert, with cooked rice grains and sometimes pine nuts. In the main method, malt water (sprouted, ground, filtered barley) is poured onto cooked rice and steeped at about 62 °C until the rice grains float, then the liquid is filtered and boiled until sweet, with "no sugar" added. The pumpkin version (*hobak-sikhye*) has sugar added to taste and is fermented for several days, as is Andong sikhye. The article gives no steeping time or quantities, notes some sentences in its preparation section look garbled, and says there is "not yet a solid literary basis" for its name. Health claims (aiding digestion, helping hangovers) are all "believed". Canned versions are sold and often have rice at the bottom. I give no recipe because the method needs a steady 62 °C for an unstated time, which I cannot specify safely.

Hangwa and yakgwa

The hangwa article says hangwa is the general term for traditional Korean confections, which with *tteok* form the sweet category of Korean cuisine. Its eight main categories include *yumil-gwa* (deep-fried wheat dough), *yugwa* (deep-fried glutinous rice dough), *dasik* (bite-size sweets

pressed from honeyed powder in a mould, usually eaten with tea), *jeonggwa* (candied fruits, roots or seeds), *yeot* (a sweet from saccharified grains), *gwapyeon*, *suksil-gwa* and candies. Honey appears in suksil-gwa and yumil-gwa, rice flour in dasik, sesame in dasik and *yeot-gangjeong*.

The yakgwa article says it is "a type of yumil-gwa", the infobox lists wheat flour, honey and sesame oil, and the lead adds rice wine and ginger juice. The only frying figure is from a 2019 lab study: dough pieces "deep fried in soybean oil at 90 to 150 °C", then soaked in syrup, which the article calls *jupcheong*. That is a study condition, not a home method, and I give no recipe. The claim that yakgwa is popular at Seollal and Chuseok is tagged "citation needed".

HOT GRIDDLE, SUGAR AND YEAST

Hot filling: hotteok filling melts into a molten sugar syrup that burns mouths and fingers. Let each pancake cool several minutes before biting.
Pressing: a pancake turner or flat spatula can stand in for the article's pressing circle; keep your fingers clear and do not use a thin plastic tool on a hot griddle.
Nuts: peanuts and walnuts are allergens; milk, wheat and (for sauces) soy, sesame and fish are too.
Deep frying: I give no deep-fried recipe in this chapter (yakgwa) because a home deep fryer needs careful oil handling and the articles give no method.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · TASTING

A three-sauce tasting

20 minutes | 2 portions | balancing salty, sweet, sour and hot

Make small amounts of three sauces and taste each with the same plain food: rice and cucumber or a plain pancake. Write down which tastes saltiest, sweetest, sourest and hottest. Amounts are mine.

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

2 tbsp	ssamjang (Chapter 1 recipe)
2 tbsp	cho ganjang (Chapter 8: soy sauce, rice vinegar, sesame oil, a little sugar)
1 tbsp	gochujang
2 tsp	rice vinegar
1 tsp	sugar
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1 cup	cooked rice and some cucumber sticks

1. Make the ssamjang and the cho ganjang as in Chapters 1 and 8.
2. For the third, mix the gochujang, vinegar, sugar and sesame oil (this follows the ingredient list of the bibim-guksu sauce in Chapter 7; the proportions are mine).
3. Taste each with a bite of plain rice or cucumber. Rinse with water between them.
4. Write down one change for each: more sweet, more sour, less salt, more heat.

LEVEL 3 · SWEET

Hotteok: sweet filled pancakes

40 minutes active | 2 hours rising | 4 pancakes | working with yeast dough and a molten filling

The article lists the dough ingredients and says the dough rises for several hours; the amounts, the rising time I use and the cooking time are mine. Dried yeast and a warm kitchen help.

INGREDIENTS (4 PANCAKES)

200 g	plain or strong bread flour
1 tsp	fast-action dried yeast
1 tbsp	sugar
1 pinch	salt
60 ml	warm milk
50 ml	warm water
3 tbsp	brown sugar, for the filling
1 tsp	cinnamon
2 tbsp	chopped walnuts or peanuts (optional)
1 tbsp	cooking oil for the pan

1. Mix the flour, yeast, sugar and salt. Add the warm milk and water and mix to a stiff, slightly sticky dough. Knead for about 5 minutes.
2. Cover and leave in a warm place for 1 to 2 hours, until puffy and nearly doubled (the article says several hours; watch the dough, not the clock).
3. Mix the brown sugar, cinnamon and nuts for the filling.
4. Oil your hands. Divide the dough into 4. Flatten each into a disc, put a quarter of the filling in the middle, and pinch the edges closed into a ball.
5. Heat the oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Place the balls seam-side down and cook for 1 minute, then press each flat with a spatula to about 1.5 cm thick.
6. Cook 2 to 3 minutes a side over medium-low heat until golden and the filling has melted (mine). If it browns too fast, lower the heat.

7. Rest for a few minutes before eating: the filling is very hot.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · RISING TIME

Make a half batch of dough, and cook one pancake after 1 hour of rising and one after 3 hours. Compare the texture, taste and how easy the dough was to shape.

EXPERIMENT 2 · FILLING

Fill hotteok with brown sugar only, with brown sugar and cinnamon, and with brown sugar, cinnamon and nuts. Which holds together best? Which leaks?

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Name the three table sauces from earlier chapters, with their ingredients, and say which source each came from. Which one would you use with a pancake?

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Describe hotteok, sikhye and yakgwa in a sentence each from the articles, and say which hedged claims you left out.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

Make the hotteok and write a note on rise, texture, filling and what you would change. Include the time the dough took to rise and how long each side cooked.

→ Solution

GAPS IN WHAT I READ

No article gives quantities. I read no article on sauces as a group, so the sauce table repeats earlier chapters. I did not read the later sections of the sikhye, hangwa or yakgwa articles beyond those named, nor articles on bingsu, patbingsu, tteok or sweet red bean paste. The sikhye preparation text looked garbled in places. I did not give a sikhye or yakgwa recipe. I cannot tell you where to buy malt powder or hotteok mix in the UK.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Sauces:** ssamjang, cho ganjang, gochujang-vinegar-sugar-sesame oil; balance salty, sweet, sour, hot
- **Hotteok:** yeast dough of wheat flour, water, milk, sugar; rises several hours; brown sugar and nut filling; pressed on a griddle
- **Sikhye:** rice and malt drink; malt water on cooked rice at about 62 °C (described, not given as a recipe)
- **Hangwa:** traditional confections; yakgwa is a deep-fried wheat and honey type (described, not given as a recipe)
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts and times

Next chapter: Capstone: A Korean Meal at Home, which plans and cooks a whole meal from the earlier chapters.

Korean Cookery

Chapter 10 · Capstone: A Korean Meal at Home

SKILL GOAL

Plan a whole meal for two, shop for it, cook the dishes so they arrive together, and set the table the way the earlier chapters described.

Shopping list for this chapter

How this chapter was checked I read no new sources for this chapter. Every dish comes from Korean Cookery 1 to 9, which took their descriptions from the Wikipedia articles named there. **Every quantity and time in those recipes is my own untested starting point, and so is the timeline below; I cannot cook.** The running order and the choice of menu are mine. Safety notes are general advice of mine.

The meal

Korean Cookery 1 described a meal as rice, soup, a shared stew or main dish, banchan and kimchi, with the number of banchan counted in *cheop* and kimchi not counted. This menu is for two people and has three banchan, so it is a three-cheop meal in the article's counting, with kimchi as well.

PART	DISH	FROM
Rice (*bap*)	Plain short-grain rice, with the crust kept for tea	Korean Cookery 2
Soup (*guk*)	Kongnamul-guk, soybean sprout soup	Korean Cookery 5
Main dish	Pan-cooked bulgogi, eaten as lettuce wraps with ssamjang	Korean Cookery 6 and 1
Banchan 1	Sigeumchi-namul, seasoned spinach	Korean Cookery 3
Banchan 2	Kongnamul-muchim, seasoned bean sprouts	Korean Cookery 3
Banchan 3	Gamja-jorim, potatoes simmered in soy sauce	Korean Cookery 3

PART	DISH	FROM
Kimchi	Kkakdugi made earlier in the week, or shop-bought	Korean Cookery 4
After the meal	Rice tea from the crust	Korean Cookery 2

Two of the banchan use soybean sprouts and the soup uses them as well, so one 400 g bag does all three (150 g for the soup, 200 g for the muchim, mine). If you would rather vary it, swap the soup for the doenjang-jjigae from Korean Cookery 5 or add a steamed egg from Korean Cookery 3.

The plan

Four days before

Make the kkakdugi from Korean Cookery 4, since it needs time to ferment. The two articles gave 24 to 48 hours at room temperature and about two weeks in a cool place, and they disagree, so taste it daily and refrigerate when it is right for you. If you are not ready to ferment anything, buy a jar of kimchi; Korean Cookery 5 says the sour kind suits stews, but for the table any kind will do.

The day before

- Shop from the list. Check labels for soy, wheat, fish and sesame.
- Make the ssamjang (Korean Cookery 1) and the cho-ganjang-style dip if you want one; they keep in a covered pot in the fridge for a day.
- Wash the lettuce and dry it well; slice the beef thinly (or freeze it for about an hour first, Korean Cookery 6).

The cooking day: a timeline (mine, untested)

TIME BEFORE EATING	DO THIS
90 minutes	Rinse the rice and leave it to soak (30 minutes). Mix the beef marinade and marinate the beef in the fridge for about 30 minutes.
60 minutes	Peel and cube the potatoes and start the jorim simmering; stir now and then.

TIME BEFORE EATING	DO THIS
45 minutes	Blanch the spinach, squeeze, season. Put the bean sprouts on to steam in a lidded pot (about 5 to 6 minutes), then season half for the muchim.
30 minutes	Put the rice on to cook (Korean Cookery 2 timings). Take the beef out of the fridge.
15 minutes	Make the soup: the other half of the sprouts, water, garlic, soy sauce. Finish the potato glaze with sesame oil.
5 minutes	Set the table (below). Heat the pan very hot for the beef.
0	Fry the beef in small batches and bring it, hot, straight to the table. Serve everything else already on the table.

Leave a little crust in the rice pot by keeping the low heat on a few minutes longer, as Korean Cookery 2 describes. Use it for rice tea after the meal.

Setting the table

For each person: a bowl of rice, with the soup bowl to its right (the guk article, Korean Cookery 5), a spoon and chopsticks (sujeo, Korean Cookery 2). Never stand chopsticks upright in the rice. In the middle, to share: the bulgogi, lettuce, ssamjang, the three banchan and the kimchi. Wrap a piece of meat in a lettuce leaf with a little ssamjang and eat it in one bite, as the articles described.

SAFETY FOR THE WHOLE MEAL

Meat and eggs: cook the beef through; keep raw-meat boards separate and wash your hands (general advice, mine).
Hot things: five dishes means several hot pots at once. Give each a lid and a spoon, keep handles turned in, and take the glaze pan off the heat when you walk away.
Leftover rice: cool it quickly, refrigerate, and reheat until steaming hot all the way through.
Kimchi jar: release gas slowly; discard if you see fuzzy mould or smell something rotten (Korean Cookery 4).
Allergens across the menu: soy, wheat (some soy sauces), sesame, fish (if you used fish sauce in the kimchi) and, if you add it, egg.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1 · ORDER

Cook the meal once with the timeline above and once in an order of your own. Note which dishes were ready too early or too late, and which you would serve warm, at room temperature or cold.

EXPERIMENT 2 · ONE PORTION OR FOUR

Scale one dish (the soup or the jorim) to one portion and to four. What changes: pot size, simmer time, seasoning? Write down your own rule.

Challenges

CHALLENGE 1

Cook the whole meal for two (or for a guest), following the timeline, and write down the time each dish was ready and what you would change.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 2

Write a different menu: change the main dish and soup, keep three banchan and kimchi, and list which chapters each dish comes from. Explain what you swapped and why.

→ Solution

CHALLENGE 3

List the five claims in this course you trust least (for example the article disagreements and the untested amounts), and say how you would check each one: a cookbook, a Korean cook, a taste test or a thermometer.

→ Solution

What the sources left open

- **Amounts.** No article in this course gave recipe quantities. Every amount is mine and untested, so a recipe that tastes wrong is probably my guess, not your cooking.
- **Fermentation times.** The kimchi and kkakdugi articles gave 24 to 48 hours and about two weeks (Korean Cookery 4).
- **The pajeon batter.** One article gave two batters that disagree (Korean Cookery 8).
- **Kimchi origins.** The articles named Goguryeo and Baekje without reconciling them (Korean Cookery 1).
- **Origins and health claims.** Where the articles hedged ("believed", "some scholars assert", "citation needed"), this course reported the hedge and made no health claim.

What this course left out

It left out North Korean cooking, regional specialities beyond what the articles named, fermented fish, seafood-led soups, street frying (twigim), sundae, naengmyeon, jajangmyeon, bingsu, tteok making, the royal court table, vegetarian temple cooking, drinks apart from rice tea and sikhye, and buying a kimchi refrigerator. Several of these are good starts for a second course. The Korea courses on history, K-pop, literature, webtoons, taekwondo and festivals remain separate.

QUICK REFERENCE

- **Meal for two:** rice, soup, main dish, three banchan, kimchi, rice tea
- **Counting:** cheop counts the banchan, not kimchi
- **Table:** soup to the right of the rice; chopsticks never upright in rice; shared dishes in the middle
- **Order of cooking:** rice soak and marinade, potatoes, banchan, rice, soup, beef last
- **Mine, untested:** all amounts, times and this timeline

Where next: this completes *Korean Cookery*. The planned Korea courses on history, K-pop, literature, webtoons, taekwondo and festivals can follow the same method, and a second cookery course could take the dishes listed above.