

HOW TO CHANGE UP CHICKEN





Chicken is a popular protein source for good reason. It is lean, packed with protein, affordable, and while it may not seem like it when you eat it every day, it is actually very versatile.

If you change cooking methods from time to time, and use a variety of seasonings and/or low-calorie condiments, the options are endless.

Here are a few of our cooking tips and favorite ways to make that bland bird less boring.

COOKING TIPS

NO MATTER THE COOKING METHOD OR SEASONING COMBOS, HERE ARE SOME USEFUL TIPS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER.

POUND IT

One step people often skip is **POUNDING**. You want to pound chicken to an even thickness. If you skip this step, the thicker portion will take longer to cook to the safe temperature, while the thinner section of chicken breast will get overcooked. Pounding also **TENDERIZES** the meat.



BE NICE TO YOUR BUTCHER

You can ask your butcher to halve your chicken breasts to an even thickness. Many will gladly do this for you. Thinner slices will help your chicken cook more evenly. This can often result in even cooking without the pounding; however, keep in mind pounding does tenderize, so we still suggest it!



INVEST IN A THERMOMETER

When grilling, baking, or searing, using a thermometer is the only way to know if the chicken is done without the threat of overcooking. Check for an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. You will then want to let chicken breasts rest for 5 minutes before slicing.



MAKE IT PLAIN

Unless you are sure you want to eat the same flavor for a few days, try making your chicken without any seasonings and then add them as you eat! Otherwise, you will end up with a few days, or weeks worth, of single-purpose protein. Keep the seasoning none to basic (salt and pepper), and then you can season with each meal based on what you are craving! This means that in one day you could have Mexican, Chinese, Italian, Indian, Greek, Thai, you name it.



COOKING METHODS

BAKE IT

This is probably the most popular, but if you don't do it right, you will end up with chicken jerky! For moist, oven-baked-chicken... all you need is a little prep and patience!

Make sure your oven is fully preheated to 425 degrees before baking. Some ovens will be different, so you may need to experiment with temperature, but cooking at a high temperature will help to lock in those juices, resulting in tender, juicy chicken every time.

COOKING TIME WILL VARY BASED ON THE SIZE OF YOUR (INDIVIDUAL) CHICKEN BREASTS.

4-6 OUNCE BREASTS APPROX. 18 MINUTES

7-8 OUNCES BREASTS APPROX. 20 MINUTES

9 OUNCES AND ABOVE APPROX. 22 MINUTES



SLOW COOKING

The Crock-Pot is a miracle worker when it comes to whipping up chicken with minimal fuss. Season the chicken with the herbs of your choice, lay it on the bottom and set the Crock-Pot on low. You will come home to a mouthwatering aroma and juicy, tender chicken that easily shreds apart.

You can cook it with nothing more than a little water, or you can use chicken broth.

WE SUGGEST COOKING IT ON LOW INSTEAD OF HIGH FOR 6-8 HOURS. IF YOU NEED IT DONE FASTER, YOU CAN ALSO COOK IT FOR 4-6 HOURS ON HIGH.

FIRE UP THE GRILL

Grilling is a great way to cook a bunch of chicken at one time and add that fresh off the grill flavor. See our "marinade" suggestions below for some ideas on how to marinate before placing on the grill! We find this results in the best flavor when using the grilling method!

HEAT YOUR GRILL TO MEDIUM HEAT AND PLACE THE CHICKEN BREASTS ON THE GRILL. COVER AND LET COOK ABOUT 5-7 MINUTES, THEN FLIP. GRILL ANOTHER 5-8 MIN OR UNTIL THE INTERNAL TEMPERATURE READS 165.

PAN SEAR

This method is quick and allows you to cook small fresh batches with whatever flavor you are craving.

FOR BEST RESULTS, PAT YOUR CHICKEN DRY FIRST AND MAKE SURE THE SKILLET IS HOT BEFORE THE CHICKEN IS ADDED.

Spray your pan with some cooking spray, then heat your skillet to medium-high heat. Add your chicken to the HOT pan. Cook for 4-5 min. on one side (pending chicken thickness) flip and cook on the other side for another 4-5 minutes.

Resist the urge to flip back and forth. Allowing the chicken to stay in the same place in the skillet ensures that cooking isn't disrupted. The chicken will start to slightly "lift" from the surface when it's ready to be turned over to the other side.

AIR "FRY"

If you haven't jumped on the "air fry" bandwagon yet... we urge you to look into it. What you can throw in an air fryer is endless (talk about a tasty way to step up your veggie game.)

FOR MEATS, USING AN AIR FRYER WILL RESULT IN THAT "FRIED CHICKEN" TASTE AND TEXTURE... WITHOUT THE UNHEALTHY CALORIES!

Crispy on the outside and tender on the inside! Cooking times will vary based on your air fryer. Most come with handy guides you can use!



SEASONING COMBOS

EACH RECIPE YIELDS ENOUGH SPICE FOR APPROX 16OZ RAW CHICKEN



COMBO ONE

- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Pinch of cayenne pepper

Combine spices and rub generously into the chicken breast before cooking.

This combo is a favorite because it contains an ingredient in one of our most important Sculpt Nation supplements, [TURMERIC](#).

However, it takes more than a sprinkle of the ancient herb to reap its wide range of potential health benefits.

We suggest you supplement with our [TURMERIC CAPSULES](#) in addition to using it to flavor your food.

COMBO TWO

1 teaspoon of garlic powder
1 teaspoon of ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon of ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon of smoked paprika
1/2 teaspoon of sea salt
1/4 teaspoon of ground black pepper
Combine spices and rub generously into the chicken breast

COMBO FOUR

1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon curry powder
1/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
Combine spices and rub generously into the chicken breast before cooking

COMBO THREE

1 teaspoon ancho chili powder
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/2 teaspoon oregano
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder or dried garlic flakes
Combine spices and rub generously into the chicken breast before cooking

COMBO FIVE

2 teaspoons paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons dried thyme
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
salt and freshly ground black pepper
Combine spices and rub generously into the chicken breast before cooking

BONUS IDEA

Don't knock this one until you try it. It's only one ingredient... cinnamon.

**YES, CINNAMON ON CHICKEN! NOTICE IT WAS ONE OF
THE INGREDIENTS IN OUR COMBO #1 AS WELL!**

Use this as a stand-alone spice or add our PB sauce (below.)
You can also add some "spice" with the sweet (chili pepper
or cayenne) and have a "sweet & spicy" option!

IN A PINCH?! There are tons of pre-made spice mixes on the market.
Take some time to browse the shelves of your supermarket (Trader
Joe's has some really interesting ones) and check out some of the
companies that cater to the "fitness community." You can find these
all over Instagram. They have some really unique combos that
are also typically "low sodium" - if sodium is a concern for you.



SAUCES & CONDIMENTS



MARINADES

Browse the condiment aisle at your grocery store. There are lots of low-calorie options. Just keep in mind those macros are per serving size, and serving sizes are often pretty small. You can also create your own using something as simple as spices and lemon or lime juice, coconut aminos (they taste just like soy sauce but with less sodium), balsamic vinegar, etc. into the chicken breast before cooking.



MUSTARD

Did you know it comes in other varieties besides basic yellow? Dijon, sweet, sour, spicy, hot, and many more! Of course, check that label, but most have 10 calories per serving or less.



LOW-CALORIE BBQ SAUCE

Most BBQ sauce has as many carbs as a potato (ounce for ounce), but there are a couple of brands out there that have as little as 2 carbs per serving.



PEANUT SAUCE

I know it sounds odd. But think about it for a second. Many Thai restaurants have peanut dipping sauces. So while the two may not seem like the perfect pair, they taste great together. You can make your own "peanut sauce" at home using powdered peanut butter instead of the real thing.

OTHER OPTIONS

SOMETIMES JUST CHANGING THE "TEXTURE" OR TEMPERATURE OF FOOD
MAKES YOU THINK YOU ARE EATING SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT



MAKE MEATBALLS

Buy pre-ground chicken breast or make your own in a food processor. Next, mix in some spices, form into "balls" and bake or air fry!



EAT IT COLD

Toss some of that Crock-Pot shredded chicken on to a salad, or make a modified chicken salad using your favorite recipe, except swap out the high-calorie mayonnaise for things like a low-calorie option or even greek yogurt. Always remember that every calorie counts and those condiments can add up quickly!



PUREE IT

Did you know that if you put cooked chicken in a food processor, it makes a creamy "dip." Add in some seasonings and give it a try!

RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

BOTTOM LINE

Always read the labels and pay attention to portion sizes since many condiments are not calorie-free. But there are many ways to keep your chicken delicious and interesting, even if it's just switching your cooking method or using calorie free spices like [TURMERIC](#).

Think outside the box, modify your favorite comfort foods/recipes, or create healthy copycats of your favorite restaurant dishes... **GET CREATIVE!**



GREENS

As you start eating more protein, don't forget about your veggies! Leafy greens are loaded with nutrients you can't find in many other foods. But we know it's not always easy to load your plate with enough of them. Sculpt Nation **GREENS** taste great and you get multiple servings of vegetables per serving PLUS ingredients that support gut health and collagen production. Enjoy our **GREENS** daily to support better health!

[LEARN MORE](#) 



TURMERIC

This ancient herb is excellent for seasoning your chicken, but it goes way beyond satisfying your taste buds. **TURMERIC** has been studied in over 3000 publications over the last 25 years and is now demonstrating what the ancient Chinese and Ayurvedics have known for generations, that taken in the right doses, it can help support healthy joints, increase energy levels, improve digestion, and reduce inflammation.

[LEARN MORE](#) 

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