

the AIR FRYER *know-how*

COOKING TIPS THAT GET CONSISTENT RESULTS



THE AIR FRYER KNOW-HOW

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WHY AN AIR FRYER—

I got my first air fryer around 2017, back when they were just starting to blow up online. I remember opening the box, feeling VERY excited. I played around with it, sure—but then it got pushed to the back corner of my counter and slowly disappeared into kitchen appliance limbo.

Fast forward to 2020. I had more time at home (you know why), and I figured: why not give that thing another shot? It was like discovering a whole new tool that had been under my nose the whole time.

MINI CONVECTION OVEN ON *TURBO MODE*

It circulates hot air super fast, which means food cooks quicker and gets that perfect crisp without needing a ton of oil.

This guide is here to help you use it with confidence—beyond the frozen stuff. You can cook hearty, delicious meals in it. You just need a few ideas and a couple of tricks.

DON'T HAVE ONE YET?

Well, I just might convince you just how worth it having one is! It's fast, easy, low-mess, and way more versatile than people think. And honestly, if I had to do it all over again? I'd take mine out of the box *way* sooner.

Mandy A.

THIS *or* THAT

choosing the right air fryer



"Wait, there are different air fryers?" A hundred percent, YES.

You've got the classic basket kind, toaster oven styles, dual-drawer setups, and even ones with built-in thermometers and rotisseries.

Some are compact and cute, others take up half your counter. And while they all work using the same rapid hot air, they don't all cook the same.

Shape, size, and features can make a big difference in how things crisp, bake, or roast—so knowing your model is key to crushing it in the kitchen.

The right air fryer for your space and cooking style can seriously change the game. It makes everything run smoother, cook faster, and taste better.

I'll let you in on what I know from experience so you can get to enjoy your kitchen gadget!



BASKET-STYLE ►

These are the **most common** and usually what people mean when they say “air fryer.” They look like a pod with a drawer you pull out.

Super easy to use, great for smaller households, and especially good for things like fries, nuggets, frozen snacks, and small portions of veggies or protein.

If you're in the market, [air fryer from Ninja](#) is a really solid all-around option—good size, consistent results, and not too bulky for a countertop.

OVEN-STYLE ►

These look more like **mini toaster ovens**. They have racks and trays and usually a glass door.

They're ideal if you want to cook more than one thing at once or bake larger items like a whole pizza, roast a chicken, or bake muffins.

My choice for an oven-type is the [air fryer from Cosori](#) — it's spacious without being obnoxiously huge, and it comes with rotisserie accessories too if that's your thing.





DUAL-BASKET ►

Great if you're **feeding a family** or want to cook two totally different things at once. Each basket has its own temperature and timer, which is a game-changer when you don't want your veggies overcooked while waiting for your protein to finish.

This [dual-basket air fryer](#) is a popular one that's surprisingly easy to clean and gives you full flexibility for weeknight dinners.

COMPACT ►

If you're **cooking for one** or tight on space, don't take these tiny guys for granted! Just know you'll need to batch cook anything larger than a sandwich.

This **cute, compact air fryer** is the one I got for my niece when she went off to college. It's fairly cheap, fits in her dorm room like a charm, and most importantly, it still gets the job done.





small tips **HUGE DIFFERENCE**

*Tricks and habits you should know
to get the most out of your air fryer*

THE CLASSIC CRISPS

FRIES, VEGGIE CHUNKS, NUGGETS

POWER UP BEFORE YOU COOK



A quick 2–5 minute preheat can make a big difference in even cooking and crisp texture. That blast of heat helps seal the surface and shortens overall cook time.

Not every recipe needs it. Thin cuts or certain frozen items can skip preheating without sacrificing results. And if your air fryer has a built-in preheat mode or advanced heating elements, you may not need to preheat at all.

MATCH THE MATES



When you're air frying from scratch, (hand-cut fries, chicken strips, veggie chunks), aim to cut everything to roughly the same size and thickness.

Uniform pieces cook at the same rate, so you're not pulling half the batch early while the rest plays catch-up. It gives you that satisfying "every piece is perfect" moment when you open the basket, too!



SHAKE EARLY, SHAKE OFTEN



Don't wait until the halfway mark. Give the basket a good shake after just 3–4 minutes so steam has a chance to escape before it softens your food. Then shake again every few minutes to keep everything moving.

This is especially key for small items like shoestring fries or popcorn shrimp that can clump together.

SPRITZ, THEN SEASON



A quick **mist of oil** before adding seasoning makes spices stick instead of tumbling into the bottom of the basket. It also helps prevent that burnt, dusty seasoning smell.

The oil locks flavor to the surface and gives the seasoning a chance to toast lightly as the food cooks.

THE GOLDEN GUARANTEE



Never overcrowd your basket! Everything should be in a single layer, even if it means cooking in batches. Air fryers need space between pieces so hot air can fully surround each one. Otherwise, you'll end up with pale spots or uneven cooking.

The payoff? Consistent golden color and crunch from every angle.



THE BIG AND BOLD

SOUPS, CASSEROLES, THICK MEATS



CONTAIN THE GOOD STUFF



Soups, stews, and casseroles are absolutely possible, but only if you use the right container. A heat-safe dish, pot, or **ramekin** keeps liquids from splashing into the fan (and your countertop).

Overall, it makes removing the dish far easier and safer.



TOP SHIELDING



Cheese, breadcrumbs, or pastry tops can go from golden to scorched fast.

Cover the dish with foil or parchment for the first half of cooking to protect the surface, then remove it for the final stretch so it can brown beautifully without drying out.



STAGGER THE COOK



Dense dishes benefit from a two-stage approach: start covered so the inside can steam and heat through, then uncover to let the exterior crisp or caramelize.

This method works wonders for stuffed peppers, baked pasta, and roasts.



SIZE MATTERS



The air fryer needs space for circulation.

For whole roasts or stuffed squash, choose portions that fit with at least an inch of clearance all around. That little bit of extra room makes a big difference in even cooking.

THE SWEET SIDE

DESSERT BARS, CAKES, COOKIES

PARCHMENT SLING



Cut parchment so it lines the base of your pan and leaves “handles” over the sides. That way, you can lift brownies, bars, or cakes straight out without breaking them apart. It’s a lifesaver for delicate bakes.

Silicone liners with built in handles also work like a charm!

LOWER AND SLOWER



Air fryers brown quickly—often *too* quickly. Lower your baking temp by 15–25°F from the oven recipe so the inside can cook before the top over-browns.

A slightly longer cook time will reward you with even color and a tender crumb.

ROTATE FOR EVENNESS



Most oven-style air fryers run hotter in the back than the front. Rotating your pan 180° halfway through baking ensures an even rise and browning.

It’s the easiest way to get bakery-level symmetry without any special equipment.



perfect timings,
every time.

Tostitos AIR FRYER COOKING TIMES

VEGETABLES

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Asparagus	Slice, 1-inch	400 °F	5
Beets	Whole	400 °F	40
Broccoli		400 °F	6
Brussels Sprouts	Halved	380 °F	15
Carrots	Slice 1/2-inch	380 °F	15
Cauliflower		400 °F	12
Corn on the cob		390 °F	6
Eggplant	1 1/2-inch cubes	400 °F	15
Fennel	Quartered	370 °F	15
Green Beans		400 °F	5
Kale Leaves		250 °F	12
Mushrooms	Slice, 1/4-inch	400 °F	5
Onions	Pearl	400 °F	10
Parsnips	1/2-inch chunks	380 °F	15
Peppers	1-inch chunks	400 °F	15
Potatoes (Baked)	Whole	400 °F	40
Potatoes (Chunk)	1-inch	400 °F	12
Potatoes (Small Baby)	1.5 lbs	400 °F	15
Squash	1/2-inch chunks	400 °F	12
Sweet Potato (Baked)		380 °F	30-35
Tomatoes (Cherry)		400 °F	4
Tomatoes (Halves)		350 °F	10
Zucchini	1/2-inch chunks	400 °F	12

FROZEN FOODS

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Breaded Shrimp		400 °F	9
Chicken Nuggets		400 °F	10
Chicken Tenders		400 °F	15
Corn Dogs		400 °F	15
Dumplings		400 °F	8-10
Egg Rolls / Spring Rolls		400 °F	8-10
French Fries (Thick Cut)	17 oz	400 °F	18
French Fries (Thin Cut)	20 oz	400 °F	14
Frozen Fish Fillets	1/2-inch, 10oz	400 °F	10
Frozen Fish Sticks	10 oz	400 °F	10
Meatballs		400 °F	12
Mozzarella Sticks	11 oz	400 °F	8
Onion Rings	12 oz	400 °F	10
Potato Skins		400 °F	10
Pot Stickers	10 oz	400 °F	10
Sausage Rolls		400 °F	10
Taquitoes		400 °F	10

CHICKEN

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Breasts (Bone-In)	1.25 lbs	375 °F	45-55
Breasts (Boneless)	4 oz	370 °F	16-20
Drumsticks	2.5 lbs	400 °F	18
Legs (Bone-In)	1.75 lbs	400 °F	18
Tenders		400 °F	12
Thighs (Bone-In)	2 lbs	400 °F	12
Thighs (Boneless)	1.5 lbs	400 °F	12
Whole Chicken	6.5 lb	400 °F	12
Wings	2 lb	400 °F	12

SEAFOOD

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Calamari	8 oz	400 °F	5-7
Fish Fillet	1-inch	400 °F	5
Salmon Fillet	6 oz	400 °F	10
Scallops		400 °F	5
Shrimp		400 °F	10
Swordfish Steak		400 °F	7-10
Tuna Steak		400 °F	7-10

OTHER MEATS

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Baby Back Ribs	4-5 sections	400 °F	25-30
Bacon (Regular Cut)		400 °F	5-7
Bacon (Thick Cut)		400 °F	6-10
Pork Chops	1-inch, 6.5 oz	400 °F	12
Pork Loin	2 lbs	360 °F	55
Tenderloin	1 lb	370 °F	12
Lamb Loin Chops	1-inch thick	400 °F	8-10
Rack of Lamb	2 lbs	380 °F	22
Sausage		380 °F	15

FROZEN FAVORITES

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Chicken Nuggets		400 °F	10
Chicken Tenders		400 °F	15
Corn Dogs		400 °F	15
French Fries (Thin Cut)	20oz	400 °F	14
Meatballs		400 °F	12
Mozzarella Sticks	11 oz	400 °F	8

OTHER FAVORITES

Type	Size	Temp	Time (Min)
Apple Chips	Thin slice	360 °F	14
Bacon	Thick cut	400 °F	6-10
Baked Potatoes	Whole	400 °F	40
Brussels Sprouts	Halved	380 °F	15
Burger (Beef)	4 oz	370 °F	16-20
Chicken Wings	2 lbs	400 °F	12
Pork Chops	1-inch, 6.5 oz	400 °F	12
Salmon Fillet	6 oz	380 °F	12
Sweet Potato Chips	Slice 1/8" thick	360 °F	20

For best results, shake or flip food halfway through cooking time. Preheating time not included in cooking time.

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SKINNY MEASURING SPOONS

These narrow stainless spoons fit right into spice jars so I can season stuff straight into the basket without spilling it everywhere.

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MINI TONGS

These silicone-tipped tongs are just the right size to grab and flip stuff without tearing it up or burning my fingers.

Shop now →



MINI SPATULAS

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COUNTER MAT

I keep my fryer on this silicone countertop mat so I don't scorch the counter and so it doesn't slide around while I'm cooking.

Shop now →



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to the table, straight from your fryer

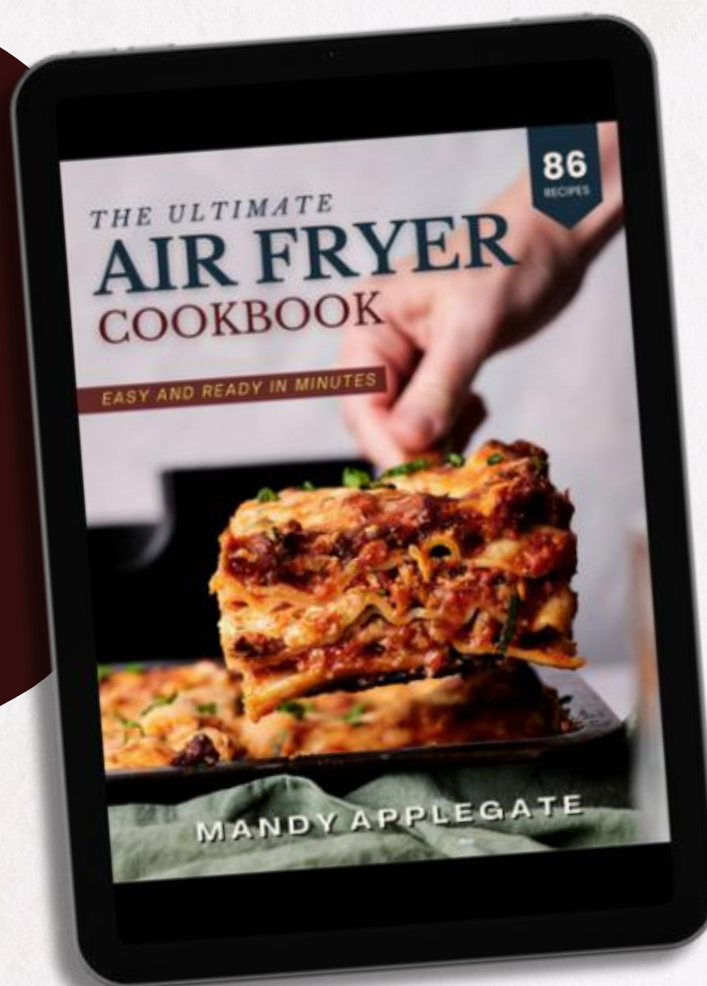


OVEN-SAFE RAMEKINS

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86

DELICIOUS RECIPES



The Ultimate Air Fryer Cookbook is everything I wish I had when I first brought mine home. This contains easy-to-follow recipes for breakfasts, lunches, appetizers, desserts, and everything in between.

Once you realize how much time and mess you're saving, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it.

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