

Cooking for yourself needn't be daunting. Start with a few core dishes such as shepherd's pie or spag bol, and as you gain confidence you'll be inspired to try more adventurous recipes.

**PAUL MERRY - EXECUTIVE CHEF** 

# So you're off to university...

With a new place to live and new friends to meet these are exciting times, but the downside is you'll be leaving home cooked meals behind - Maybe you hadn't thought of that last challenge?

Cooking for yourself needn't be daunting, but it's a good idea to get prepared rather than waiting until you arrive at uni before learning. Start with a few core dishes such as shepherd's pie or spaghetti bolognaise, and as you gain confidence you'll be inspired to try more adventurous recipes.



When you get to your halls of residence or your shared accommodation, you will find that space is very limited. You may have one drawer, one cupboard, one shelf in a fridge and one drawer in a freezer. So forget about buying lots of fancy gadgets, which will just take up space and never be used. All you need is listed overleaf. In the recipes included here, I use mugs (roughly half a pint) for measuring. Weighing scales are rarely found in student kitchens, so I made this the standard measure.

It is incredible how much money you can spend trawling a supermarket and still come home without the ingredients to make a meal. Always go shopping with a list. Plan what you are going to eat throughout the week and buy only what you need.

Top tip: never go shopping when you're hungry. You will only come back with crisps, biscuits and other carbs, half of which will be eaten before you get home. And don't be tempted down the ready-meals path; why not? Not only does the home-made one taste fresher and so much better, but it also costs less than half the price!

So be prepared, gather the basics together and start cooking simple things now.



### A staple dish for veggie students!

Here is a basic method using fresh vegetables and some ready to use noodles.

- 1 tablespoon of oil to fry
- 1 clove of garlic, crushed
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- 6 baby sweetcorn
- ½ red pepper, sliced
- 6 sugar snaps or mange tout
- ½ mug of water with 1 veggie stock cube
- 2 tablespoons of soy sauce
- 5 slices of courgette
- 3 small pieces of broccoli
- Salt and pepper
- ½ x 200g pack of ready to use noodles

- 1. Heat the oil in a wok or frying pan.
- 2. Fry the garlic and onion for 1 minute then add the rest of the ingredients apart from the noodles.
- 3. Keep the heat high and cook for 4-5 minutes until the vegetables are cooked and almost all the liquid has gone.
- 4. Stir in the noodles and cook for a further minute.
- 5. Add salt and pepper and eat straight away it's that simple!



### Brilliance on a budget!

You can sometimes buy packs of small pieces of salmon and freeze them. They are much cheaper and would be excellent for this dish.

- 2 small handfuls of Penne pasta
- 1 small piece of salmon
- 1 tablespoon olive oil to fry
- 3 spring onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons of double cream
- 1 teaspoon freeze-dried chives
- Salt and pepper

- 1. Cook the Penne Pasta (according to the instructions on the packet).
- 2. Leave to drain.
- 3. Fry the salmon in a little olive oil (if you have a small piece it should only take 2–3 minutes each side).
- Add the spring onions to the pan towards the end of the cooking time, mix them in and allow them to brown a little.
- 5. Remove the pan from the heat and gently break up the salmon.
- 6. Add the cream and the chives and return to the heat.
- 7. As soon as the cream begins to bubble, add the pasta and stir everything together.
- 8. Allow the pasta to heat through This should take around 1 minute.
- 9. Season well with salt and pepper.

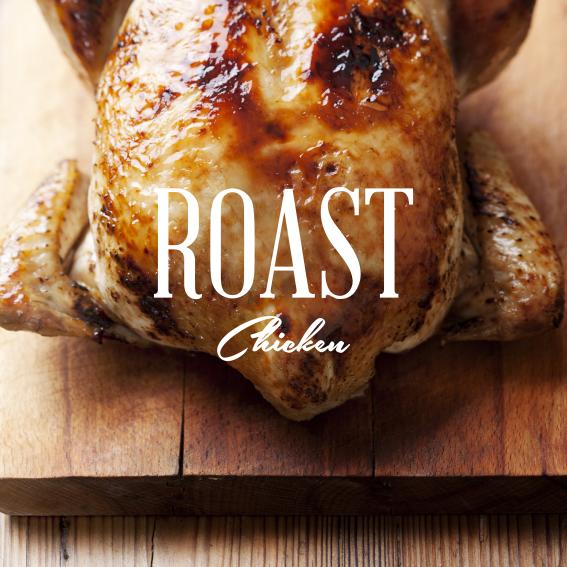


# Easy as pie!

An easy way to make shepherd's pie minus the fuss of mashed potatoes (we're so nice to you).

- 250g pack of lamb, beef or Quorn mince
- ½ a carrot chopped
- ½ an onion chopped
- Handful of peas
- ½ mug water
- 1 dessertspoon gravy granules
- 6 medium potatoes, cut into 1.5cm cubes
- 2 teaspoons butter
- Salt and pepper
- 1 mug grated cheese

- 1. Preheat oven to 180C fan oven /200C/gas 6.
- 2. Put the mince into a pan with a little oil and the onions and carrots and fry until the mince is brown all over.
- 3. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  mug water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10–15 minutes.
- 4. Add the gravy granules and peas and stir. Season with salt and pepper.
- 5. Put the potatoes in a separate pan, with enough water to cover them, boil for 10 minutes and then drain.
- 6. Add the butter and mix.
- 7. Pour the mince into the bottom of a casserole dish.
- 8. Carefully spoon the potatoes onto the top and sprinkle with the cheese.
- 9. Cook for 20-25 minutes until the top is browned.



# Individual indulgence!

If you just cook for yourself, use fewer vegetables and the leftover chicken can be used up the next day, either in sandwiches or a pasta dish.

- 1 small chicken (approximately 1.5kg)
- 4 large potatoes, cut into large pieces
- 2 onions, red or white, each cut into 6 wedges
- Oil

- 1. Preheat oven to 180C fan oven/200C/gas 6.
- 2. Place the chicken in an oiled, flat, roasting dish or a casserole dish.
- 3. Add the potatoes and the onion and brush with oil.
- 4. Sprinkle a little salt over and, if you wish, add some rosemary.
- 5. Cover with a lid or foil.
- 6. Cook for 1 hour (longer with a larger chicken).
- 7. Take the lid or foil from the chicken and cook for a further 25–45 minutes, to allow everything to brown.
- 8. Serve with vegetables.



# Impress a friend with this flashy dish for two!

It is not recommended that you reheat prawns, so if you make enough for two people, share this dish with a friend

- 1 mug basmati rice
- 2 mugs water
- 1 tablespoon oil to fry
- ½ onion, chopped finely
- 1 clove garlic, chopped very finely
- 200g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 dessertspoon tomato purée
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon curry paste
- 200g pack of peeled prawns, drained of water
- ¼ teaspoon freeze-dried basil
- Salt and pepper

- 1. Put the rice on to cook, follow the instructions on the pack
- 2. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion and garlic in the oil, until the onions begin to brown.
- 3. Add the tinned tomatoes, tomato purée, sugar and curry paste and bring to the boil.
- 4. Let the mixture cook for 2–3 minutes.
- 5. Add the prawns, basil and salt and pepper. Cook for 1–2 minutes. If you cook the prawns for too long, they will become rubbery.
- 6. Serve with the rice and if you are feeling adventurous sprinkle with chopped coriander.



### Oh so versatile!

Traditionally Mexican, tortillas are very versatile so you can fill them with an innumerable variety of ingredients.

- 1 chicken breast, cut into strips
- 1 tablespoon oil to fry
- 1 onion, sliced thinly
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 red or green pepper, sliced thinly
- 4 mushrooms, sliced thinly
- 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- 4 tablespoons water
- ½ teaspoon chilli flakes or chilli powder, add more or less according to your taste
- 4 tortilla wraps

- 1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the onions and garlic.
- 2. Fry for 3–4 minutes.
- 3. Add the chicken pieces and fry until cooked through, then add the peppers and the mushrooms.
- 4. Instead of chicken, you could use either lean steak cut into strips (approx 200g), tofu or Quorn.
- Add the tomato purée, water and the chilli, stir well and cook for a further 2 minutes to allow the flavours to mix.
- 6. Divide among the 4 wraps and enjoy!



# **Mango Magic!**

Mango pulp is a bit unusual, but is usually available at supermarkets. If you can't find it, simply buy a medium-sized mango, peel and slice it and mash the flesh together with a little water.

- 1 tablespoon oil to fry
- 2 chicken breasts, cut into bite-size pieces
- 4-5 spring onions, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped finely
- 1 mug mango pulp
- 2 teaspoons curry paste
- 1 teaspoon wholegrain mustard
- 1 tablespoon soured cream
- Rice to serve

- 1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the chicken for 2 minutes, then add the onions and garlic.
- 2. Fry for another 1 minute, stirring continuously.
- 3. Add the mango pulp, curry paste and mustard.
- 4. Simmer for 2-3 minutes over a medium heat.
- 5. Take the pan off the heat and stir in the soured cream.
- 6. Serve with rice and vegetables.



### A must to master!

Spag Bol is a must to master....cook enough meat for two and either share it with a flatmate or eat tomorrow with a jacket potato.

- 1 tablespoon of oil to fry
- 1 onion chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 250g minced beef
- 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree
- 4-5 mushrooms, sliced
- 1 beef stock cube
- 1 teaspoon of dried mixed herbs
- Salt and pepper
- Spaghetti

- 1. Heat a little oil in a large sauce pan and fry the onion and garlic for a minute.
- 2. Add the mince and cook until the meat is no longer pink.
- 3. Add the tin of tomatoes, tomato puree and mushrooms, crumb the stock cube into the pan and stir well, bring to boil then simmer gently for 10 minutes.
- 4. Add the herbs just before the end of cooking and season with salt and pepper.
- 5. Put the spaghetti on to cook (according to the instructions on the packet).
- 6. Drain the pasta and serve on a plate with the bolognaise sauce on the top.
- 7. Serve with grated cheddar or parmesan.



### The Welsh traveller!

Toast the Bread, try with beans or poached eggs....Great with HP Sauce..

- ½ Mug grated Cheddar Cheese
- 2 Teaspoons of flour
- ½ a mug of Milk
- ½ teaspoon of Mustard
- ½ teaspoon of HP Sauce
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 cm cube of butter

- 1. Mix the grated cheese and flour in a small saucepan.
- 2. Then add rest of the ingredients and heat slowly until the mixture thickens and is hot.
- 3. Spread over a slice of toast and grill until bubbling and golden.



# Simply tasty!

A simple pleasure that you can make over and over again, try a number of toppings that suit your individual taste, just add more eggs if you want to share with a friend.

- 2 Eggs
- ½ a cup of grated cheddar
- Optional extras include
- Sliced Ham
- Sliced Peppers
- Spring onions
- Sliced Mushrooms

- 1. Put two eggs in a mug and beat well with a fork, add two tablespoons of water.
- 2. Switch on the grill to heat up.
- 3. Melt about a dessertspoon of butter in a frying pan, once sizzling pour the egg mixture into the pan.
- 4. As the egg begins to set on the bottom of the pan, gently move the set egg mix around in the pan so that the runny egg takes its place, do this with 2 or 3 sweeping movements...do not continue to stir or you will get scrambled egg.
- Once the egg is set, top with some cheddar cheese or whatever takes your fancy (mushrooms, spring onion, ham and peppers is great) and place the frying pan under the hot grill. The omelette should rise.
- 6. Once it is browned on the top remove from under the grill and turn onto a plate.
- 7. Serve with salad.



# Not just for pancake day!

These delicious pancakes are perfect to finish off a great meal or even try adding some salt and pepper and fill with cheese and ham for a savoury treat...simply roll them up with the filling inside and pop in the oven for a few minutes for a yummy alternative.

- One egg
- · 1 mug of milk
- ½ mug of flour
- Butter
- + Any additional topping e.g. lemon/sugar

- 1. Put the egg, the flour and the milk into a mixing bowl. Whisk until creamy and smooth
- 2. Place a frying pan on a low heat.
- 3. Melt a small amount of butter into this pan and move around until the bottom of the pan is covered.
- 4. Pour in enough mix to cover the bottom of the pan. Be sure to mix in with the butter.
- 5. When the edges begin to go light brown, shake the pan side to side until the pancake becomes loose. Flip the pancake and continue to cook until both sides are browned.
- 6. Top with a squeeze of lemon and some sugar and your off... Repeat with the rest of the mix (don't recommend attempting to do anything else whilst cooking this... They have a tendency of burning very very quickly)



# A true classic, designed to impress!

Treat yourself to this delicious classic, cook for your friends for maximum impact as it makes a great centre piece for the table to share and enjoy....especially great on those cold dark evenings or maybe an alternative Sunday Lunch.

- 1 mug of self-raising flour
- 4 large eggs
- Pinch of salt
- ¼ mug of milk
- ½ mug of water
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- 12 thick pork sausages
- 400g tin of baked beans

- 1. Preheat the oven to 220c
- Put the flour in a bowl and add the eggs, salt and a little of the milk. Mix well with a whisk or a large spoon. Add the rest of the milk and water and beat until the mixture looks as thin as single cream.
- 3. Put the oil in a large roasting tin and place in the hot oven for 10 minutes. Put the sausages in the hot fat and return to the oven for another 10 minutes.
- 4. Take the roasting tin out of the oven and pour in the batter mix, it should bubble up around the edges as you pour it in.
- 5. Place the dish back in the oven and cook for 20-25 minutes or until browned.
- 6. Serve with the beans



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