

Kitchen Essentials

When it comes to cooking, there are some basic ingredients to have on hand that make it easier to pull together a meal, even if you don't have anything planned (or if your plan falls through). Here are some basic ingredients with info to make choosing these items easier.

PANTRY:

Ingredient	Notes
Avocado oil	Avocado oil is a nutrient dense, versatile oil that can be used for high heat cooking. It is a flavorless oil that can replace oils such as vegetable oil or canola oil in cooking. trusted brands: Chosen Foods, Primal Kitchen, Now Foods
Arrowroot	Used as a thickening agent to produce a clear gel for sauces & gravies. It thickens at a lower temperature than cornstarch or flour – substitute 2 tsp of arrowroot for 1 tbsp cornstarch, or 1 tsp of arrowroot for 1 tbsp of wheat flour. trusted brands: Bob's Red Mill, Starwest Botanicals
Baking powder	If you are a baker these are essential. If you are not a baker, these are good to have on hand as a leavening agent. Select aluminum-free products. trusted brands: Bob's Red Mill, Rumford
Baking soda	
Beans	While dried beans may be ideal, even canned beans can be appropriate. While beans are predominantly carbohydrates, they are a great source of fiber and can be used occasionally as a plant-based protein. trusted brands: Amy's, Eden Organic, Westbrae Natural, Field Day
Coconut oil	Stable oil used for cooking at medium-high temperatures. Coconut oil also offers anti-microbial properties not found in most fats. trusted brands: Barlean's, Carrington Farms, Dr. Bronner, Dr. Mercola, Field Day Garden of Life, Hain's, Kirkland, Native Forest, NOW Foods, Nutiva, Spectrum, Trader Joe's
Coconut milk, canned	Coconut milk is great for adding a creamy consistency to foods without adding dairy. It is often used in Thai and Indian cuisine and pairs well with sweet potatoes, curry, turmeric, ginger, chicken, fish, cilantro, chocolate, lemongrass, and mint. trusted brands: Natural Value , A Taste of Thai , Native Forest , Thai Kitchen

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Ghee	A type of clarified butter with the milk solids removed, useful for people who have allergies or sensitivities to milk. This can be used for cooking or frying at high temperatures. trusted brands: Fourth and Heart, Pure Indian Foods, Purity Farms, Tava Life, Tin Star Foods
Nuts, raw All varieties	All nuts contain the anti-nutrient phytate. Thus soaking nuts for 6-18 hours, then dehydrating at very low temperatures eliminates a portion of phytates, allowing your body to easily digest the nuts and to utilize the nutrients. If you frequently eat nuts, the soaking and dehydration is important, however if nuts are not a staple for you it is not as important. trusted brands: NOW Foods, Eden Organic, Woodstock
Olive oil	Cold-pressed extra virgin or virgin olive oil in dark glass (the light causes oxidation & causes rancidity) is ideal. Olive oil should be used for cold or very low heat preparation. trusted brands: Bionaturae, Braggs, Field Day, Full Circle, Kirkland, Napa Valley Naturals, Newman's Own, Spectrum, Jovial
Onions	Keep whole onions stored in a cool, dark spot in the pantry. However they can be sliced and stored in the freezer for convenience. Conventional onions are on the "clean fifteen" list, meaning they do not hold large amounts of toxins, thus onions are less important to be purchased organic.
Stevia	If you are looking for a sweetener stevia is a natural sugar replacement. Be sure when you are purchasing stevia is the only ingredient listed. Stevia can be purchased in powder form or liquid, which is easier to manage the amount used. trusted brands: Sweet Leaf
Tomatoes whole, diced, sauce, paste	Fresh tomatoes are great for cooking. They can be frozen whole and the skin easily comes off when defrosted. Otherwise, look for tomatoes packaged in glass or BPA free containers. trusted brands: Bionaturae, Jovial, Rao Homemade, Natural Value
REFRIGERATOR OR FREEZER:	
Beef	Grass fed, any cut has significantly more nutrients than conventional beef. If grass-fed beef is unavailable, look for beef labeled free of rBGH and rBST.
Bell peppers	Keep whole bell peppers stored in the refrigerator if used within 5 days, however they can be sliced and stored in the freezer for convenience. They are part of the Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen, so buy them organic when possible.

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Broth	Homemade broth, made with bones of any animal is very nourishing to the digestive tract. Be sure to find broth that does not have MSG. trusted brands: Epic, Kettle & Fire, Flavor Chef, Bonafide Provisions, Pacific Foods
Butter	Real butter. Don't bother with margarine or "tub butter." trusted brands: Cabot Creamery, Kerrygold, Organic Valley, Sierra Nevada, Trader Joe's, Tropical Traditions, Whole Foods 365
Cheese	Made from raw milk preferably. Otherwise made from milk, cultures, and rennet with minimal added ingredients. trusted brands: Applegate, Boar's Head, Cabot Creamery, Kerrygold, Maple Hill Creamery, Organic Pastures, Organic Valley, Sierra Nevada, Trader Joe's
Chicken or Turkey	Pastured, farm fresh, free range, or cage-free chicken or turkey is ideal. If these are not available look for it without added antibiotics or hormones (it will indicate it on the label).
Eggs	Farm fresh, free range, or cage free eggs to enhance the nutrient content. trusted brands: Vital Farms, Eggland's Best, Full Circle Organic, Trader Joe's
Fruit	Fresh or frozen without added sugar are good options in limited amounts. Blueberries, raspberries, black berries, strawberries, kiwi, and grapefruit are lowest on the glycemic index. Organic fruits are ideal, however not always practical. Review the Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen list for foods that should be consumed organic.
Nut butters	The ingredient list should be only the ground nut to make the butter (and maybe salt). Once opened it should be kept in the refrigerator to prevent rancidity. Try a variety of nut or seed butters. trusted brands: Arrowhead Mills, Field Day, Full Circle, Justin's, Kirkland, Mara Natha, Natural Value, Sunbutter, Trader Joe's
Nut milk Almond Coconut Cashew (avoid soy milk)	Nut milks are a great milk substitute for people who cannot tolerate dairy. They can be used in smoothies, granola, to cook with, or just as a simple replacement for milk. trusted brands: Califia, Pacific Foods, So Delicious, Silk
Organ meats	Organ meats are truly a superfood-they are loaded with nutrients that are not found in the same quantities in most foods. Look for organ meats from animals that are pastured or organic for the best nutritional bang for your buck.
Seafood, wild	Seafood is a great protein source and has nutrients not found in other meat sources. The most nutrient dense seafood sources are salmon, tuna (limited to

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	no more than once every two weeks), herring, cod, halibut, herring, mackerel, and oysters. trusted brands: Bumble Bee, Kirkland, Natural Value, Vital Choice, Wild Planet
Turkey	Farm fresh, free range, or cage-free turkey to enhance the nutrient content.
Vegetables	Fresh or frozen without added seasoning packs or sauces are good options. Organic fruits are ideal, however not always practical. Review the Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen list for foods that should be consumed organic.

DRIED SPICES, SEASONINGS, AND FLAVOR ENHANCERS:

Trusted brands of spices: Simply Organic, Frontier, Starwest Botanicals, Herbamare

Basil	Adds a light, sweet flavor and should be added to dishes just before serving. It pairs well with coconut, curry, tomatoes, garlic, lemon, olive oil, parmesan cheese, and mozzarella cheese.
Cayenne pepper	It has a piquant, warming flavor and tastes hotter as it cooks. It is well known in Cajun cuisine including onion, garlic, and bell peppers, however it also pairs well with coriander and cumin.
Chili powder	It tastes hot and is used frequently with tomatoes, cumin, cilantro, and Tabasco sauce.
Cilantro	It has a strong, distinct flavor and is best used fresh and added at the end of cooking. It pairs well with chile peppers, coconut milk, garlic, ginger, and mint.
Cinnamon powder or sticks	The sweet, slightly bitter flavor is used in warming foods. It should be added early in the cooking process. It pairs well with raisins, almonds, cardamom, cloves, coriander, and nutmeg.
Cumin seed or powder	Cumin has a bitter flavor with a warming sensation and should be added early in the cooking process. It pairs well with cayenne, coriander, garlic, saffron, turmeric, cinnamon, tomatoes, and chickpeas.
Garlic-cloves, paste, or powder	Keep whole garlic stored in a dry, low-humid environment with the tops on. Use 1/8 tsp garlic powder to replace 1 garlic clove.
Onion powder	It has a pungent flavor often used with savory foods. It works well with baking, boiling, braising, pan frying, grilling, roasting, sauteeing, and stir-frying.

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Oregano	It has a medium flavor that is reserved for savory foods. It is often used in Italian and Greek cuisine and pairs well with basil, tomato, and lemon.
Paprika	Comes in many varieties that range from sweet to hot and is used in savory foods. It should be added to cooking at the beginning of the cooking process. It is often used in Hungarian and Spanish cuisine and pairs well with beef, chicken, and fish.
Parsley	It has a light flavor that is compatible with all other herbs in savory dishes.
Salt, sea salt or Himalayan salt	Is used to enhance the flavors of other ingredients in a dish. There are multiple types of flavored salts that can be used for multiple purposes. Sea salt naturally has a higher mineral content, which differ depending on where it originates, without the additives found in table salt. trusted brands: Real Salt, Celtic Sea Salt, Himalaynia
Turmeric	It is well known for its anti-inflammatory properties. It has a bittersweet, pungent flavor often used in providing warming heat to a dish often used in Middle Eastern and Thai cuisine. It pairs well with cilantro, cumin, garlic, onions, parsley, paprika, and pepper.
Vanilla extract	It has a sweet flavor and is often used for baked goods.
apple cider vinegar	Great for use in salad dressings, dips, marinades, sauces, and reductions trusted brands: Bragg, Napa Valley Naturals
balsamic vinegar	It has a sweet, yet sour flavor and can be used when you want a sweet, low acid flavor. It should be added at the end of cooking and to finish cooking. It's often used in Italian cuisine. trusted brands: Napa Valley Naturals, Ariston
Fish sauce	It has a salty flavor that will enhance the flavors of meats, in a similar way to MSG. It's often used in Asian, Thai, and Vietnamese cuisine. trusted brands: Red Boat, Thai Kitchen
Mayonnaise	Can be used for dips and sauces. Although mayonnaise is known for its high fat content, it's the soybean oil in it that devalues the health. Other oils that can be used are avocado oil and safflower oil (be cautious of olive oil mayo, as they often have soybean oil in them). trusted brands: Sir Kensington, Primal Kitchen, Hain's

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Mustard – yellow and/or Dijon	Great for use in salad dressings, dips, marinades, sauces, and reductions. trusted brands: Sir Kinsengton, Organicville, Annie's
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