

Kitchen Appliances

Air Fryers



Air fryers use 70 to 85% less oil than conventional frying methods.

How do Air Fryers Work?

Air fryers work as a convection appliance, circulating hot air that contains fine oil droplets. They cook food faster than a traditional oven, produce crispy and crunchy exteriors, and are often used to cook foods that are typically fried.

Desserts made in air fryers are often still high in sugar and low in nutrients. Consume any fried food in moderation and use [MyPlate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov) as a guideline to create a healthy meal.

Foods That Cook Well

- French Fries
- Fish
- Breaded Appetizers
- Steak
- Chicken
- Potatoes
- Vegetables
- Desserts: brownies, cakes, churros

Foods That Do Not Cook Well

- **Raw vegetables:** Frozen vegetables crisp better than fresh.
- **Fresh greens:** Circulating air causes light, leafy greens to shift, resulting in uneven cooking. Kale coated in cooking oil (to make kale chips) is an exception.
- **Fresh cheese:** Fresh cheese melts and becomes messy. Use frozen and breaded cheese, such as frozen mozzarella sticks.
- **Wet/liquid batters:** Batters in air fryers tend to fall off before setting and do not crisp as expected.

Convert Oven Recipes to Air Fryer

Transition most conventional oven recipes to an air fryer recipe using the guidelines below:

- Reduce temperature by 25 to 30°F.
- Reduce cooking time by 20%.



Purchasing Guide

Air fryers come in a variety of styles and sizes. Consider capacity, cost, size, and features before purchasing. Expect to pay \$40 to \$100 for compact models or between \$250 to \$400 for larger, multifunctional models.

Compact fryers may be less expensive and have a smaller storage footprint, but their lower capacity can require cooking food in batches to accommodate a larger number of servings.

Air Fryer Capacity	Feeds # of People
1 to 3 Quarts	1 or 2
4 to 6 Quarts	3 to 6

Air Fryer Smoke

Smoke is not uncommon when cooking in an air fryer. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons of water to air fryer drawer before cooking high-fat foods to help prevent smoke production.

- **White smoke:** Grease or fat is burning on the bottom.
- **Black smoke:** Food is stuck in the heating element.



Cooking Tips

- **Preheat:** Follow the instruction manual – but typically preheat for 3 minutes.
- **Even cooking:** In the middle of cooking time, shake fryer basket or use tongs to flip foods. Do not overcrowd the basket; this can prevent food from cooking evenly.
- **Herbs and spices:** Mix herbs and spices with a small amount of cooking oil – or lightly spray food with cooking oil before applying herbs and spices – to help them adhere to food.
- **Oils:** Use oils with high smoke points. Examples include peanut, safflower, grapeseed, and olive oils, excluding virgin or extra virgin olive oils.
 - Measure oil to prevent using too much or too little.
 - Avoid flipping basket to remove food as oil in the bottom drawer may spill and cover the food.
- **Reheating:** Set air fryer temperature to 350°F and cook until food reaches internal temperature of 165°F.

Cleaning and Maintenance

- Before cleaning, unplug and let appliance cool.
- Clean after every use.
- Clean basket with hot, soapy water and a brush or sponge after each use.
- Avoid abrasive cleaning materials on non-stick coatings.
- Wipe exterior with a wet kitchen towel.
- Use a hard-bristled brush to remove food particles from the cooled heating element in the air fryer.

Cleaning and maintenance recommendations may vary between brands. Always consult the instruction manual.

Reference in this publication to any specific product or brand name is for educational and informational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement, recommendation, of any kind by University of Illinois Extension. Persons using such products assume responsibility for their use by current directions of the manufacturer.

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