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# What's Cookin': Here's some basic cooking tips

Today we've got a few basic cooking tips for you...

Salt is never added to a stock. This is one of the little rules that cooks live by that you might not be aware of. Salt is not added to a stock because a stock is not a finished product. A stock will be made into a sauce or a soup and while during this, it may be reduced. If salt had been added at the beginning, then the salty flavour would become stronger—maybe too strong once the stock

was reduced to its final state.  
 For better garlic flavour, add the garlic at the end. When fresh garlic is used in a sauce, its flavour does not increase as it cooks. The flavour fades as the sauce

**Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner**



cooks. So for a true garlicky flavour, add the pureed or minced garlic towards the end. Or, add a little earlier on and more towards the end of the cooking procedure. If you are sautéing vegetables and want to add garlic, add it after the other vegetables are partially cooked. The reason being that the garlic will burn before the other vegetables have fully cooked if you add the garlic at the beginning.

To make a cream soup into a low-fat version, remove the cream from the recipe and add cooked, pureed potato.

When you are boiling vegetables (including potatoes) always start with cold water. If you start with warm water in the pot, the vegetables will cook from the outside in, so the outside of the vegetable will be overdone and too soft before the middle of the vegetable ceases to be hard. When cooking potatoes, don't cut the pieces too small or the potatoes get too wet and the finished potatoes will be very watery. This is often a problem when trying to make mashed potatoes.

Eggs can be used to thicken soups and sauces. One whole egg or two egg yolks will thicken approximately one cup of liquid. When egg yolk is used to thicken soups, sauces, gravies and fillings, one egg yolk takes the place of one tablespoon of flour.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Email your questions and comments to Lori and Gerry at [whatscookin@independentfreepress.com](mailto:whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

## Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

### Ingredients

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp water
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 cups quick cooking rolled oats
- 1 cup raisins

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly grease two cookie sheets or line with parchment paper.
2. Sift together the flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon, set aside.
3. Cream the butter with both sugars in an electric mixer (or with hand mixer) un-

til light and fluffy. Add the egg and beat well, then the water and vanilla, and beat again. Turn the mixer speed to low and add the sifted flour. Finally, mix in the oats and raisins by hand.

4. Scoop out a small ball of batter and set on prepared cookie sheet, then press flat with the palm of your hand. (Make sure the cookies are spaced out well on cookie sheet because they spread).

5. Bake in the preheated oven for about 15 minutes, until the edges are golden brown but the centers are still soft. Cool on a rack.

6. Unused batter may be refrigerated and used the next day. You may also add milk chocolate chips, coconut, raisins or other dried fruit to this recipe. Either eliminate the one cup of raisins or use any combination, but do not exceed one cup.



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