GCSE

Food and Nutrition

Cooking methods

Dry heat cooking

Baking – An oven is used to circulate air to bake a variety of foods, e.g. pastries, cakes, and biscuits.

Smoking – It involves cooking food in a smoker or over a low, indirect heat while exposing it to smoke from burning wood or charcoal.

Grilling – Heat is transferred via radiation to the foods, usually at high temperatures.

BBQ – Barbecuing is similar to grilling, but the heat radiates from hot coals at a lower temperature over a longer period of time.

Microwaving – Microwaving food is a quick and convenient way to reheat, cook, or even defrost food, using electromagnetic waves that cause water molecules in the food to vibrate, producing heat.

Air fryer – A kitchen appliance that cooks by circulating hot air around the food, producing a crispy layer similar to deep frying but using little to no oil.

Dry frying – Dry frying is cooking in a frying pan without the addition of fat. You can dry fry foods that contain fat naturally, e.g. minced meat.

Fat based cooking methods

Stir frying – Stir frying tends to be done in a wok with foods coated in a small amount of oil and cooked for a short amount of time, making it a healthier method of frying. You would typically stir fry noodles, vegetables, meat, and fish. The food cooks very quickly and needs to be moved around the wok to avoid burning.

Shallow frying – Shallow frying is a method where foods, such as eggs, are cooked in a frying pan with a medium amount of fat or oil. This is a less healthy frying method, as not only do you add fat to the pan, but the fat that is released from the food during cooking stays in the pan, coating the food. This results in a higher fat content and a crispy texture.

Deep frying – Deep frying is a cooking method where food is submerged in hot oil for a quick and even cooking process. The food turns crispy on the outside while staying tender and moist on the inside.

Roasting – Like baking, roasting takes place within an oven, but fat is added to the outside of the food to help brown and crisp the outside and keep it moist inside. Fat can be added to the food e.g. roast potatoes, or the fat that has melted from the food can be spooned back over it, e.g. a whole roasted chicken. This is called basting.

Water based cooking methods

Boiling – Boiling involves cooking food in a pan of boiling water, e.g. pasta, rice, and vegetables.

Simmering – Simmering is a gentler version of boiling as the temperature is lower than boiling point.

Blanching – Blanching involves part cooking food (normally fruit and vegetables) in boiling water for a brief period of time and then plunging it into cold water. The cold water stops the cooking process and helps maintain the colour, texture, and nutritional value of the food.

Poaching – Poaching involves cooking food in a shallow pan of liquid below boiling point, e.g. eggs, fruit, fish, and meat. It is a gentler way of cooking in liquid and maintains the structure of the food.

Steaming – Steaming is when you cook food, typically vegetables or fish, through steam from boiling water.

Braising – Braising involves slowly cooking food within a lidded pot which contains liquid, resulting in a combination of simmering and steaming.