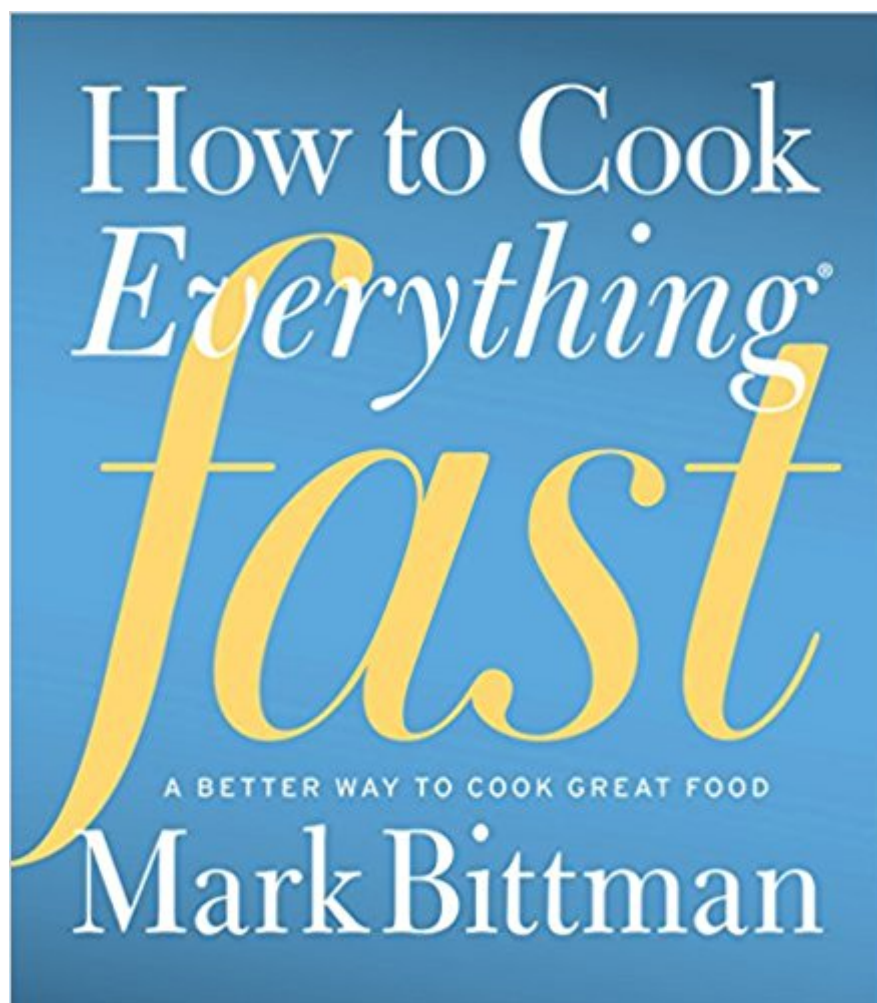


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How To Cook Everything Fast: A Better Way To Cook Great Food



Synopsis

Homemade wonton soup in 30 minutes. Chicken Parmesan without dredging and frying. Fruit crisp on the stovetop. The secret to cooking fast is cooking smart—choosing and preparing fresh ingredients efficiently. In *How to Cook Everything Fast*, Mark Bittman provides a game plan for becoming a better, more intuitive cook while you wake up your weekly meal routine with 2,000 main dishes and accompaniments that are simple to make, globally inspired, and bursting with flavor. *How to Cook Everything Fast* is a book of kitchen innovations. Time management—the essential principle of fast cooking—is woven into revolutionary recipes that do the thinking for you. You’ll learn how to take advantage of downtime to prepare vegetables while a soup simmers or toast croutons while whisking a dressing. Just cook as you read—and let the recipes guide you quickly and easily toward a delicious result. Bittman overhauls hundreds of classics through clever (even unorthodox) use of equipment and techniques—encouraging what he calls “naturally fast cooking”—and the results are revelatory. There are standouts like Cheddar Waffles with Bacon Maple Syrup (bold flavors in less time); Charred Brussels Sprout Salad with Walnuts and Gorgonzola (the food processor streamlines chopping); Spaghetti and Drop Meatballs with Tomato Sauce (no rolling or shaping); and Apple Crumble Under the Broiler (almost instant dessert gratification). Throughout, Bittman’s commonsense advice and plentiful variations provide cooks with freedom and flexibility, with tips for squeezing in further shortcuts, streamlined kitchen notes, and illustrations to help you prep faster or cook without a recipe. *How to Cook Everything Fast* puts time on your side and makes a lifetime of homemade meals an exciting and delicious reality.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fastest Chicken Parm from [How to Cook Everything Fast](#) Time: 30 minutes | Serves: 4 This take on the classic couldn't be easier: Instead of dredging and pan-frying, you simply stack the ingredients in two stages on a baking sheet and broil. As an added bonus, the tomatoes taste fresh and juicy while the cheese and bread crumb topping stays crunchy. (For eggplant like this, see the Variations.) Photo: Fred Conrad/The New York Times

Ingredients

- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 medium ripe tomatoes
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds)
- Salt and pepper
- 8 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese
- 2 ounces Parmesan cheese (1/2 cup grated)
- 1 bunch fresh basil
- 1 cup bread crumbs

Step 1 Turn the broiler to high; put the rack 6 inches from the heat. Put 2 tablespoons olive oil on a rimmed baking sheet and spread it around; put the baking sheet in the broiler. Core and slice the tomatoes. Cut the chicken breasts in half horizontally to make 2 thin cutlets for each breast. Press down on each with the heel of your hand to flatten.

Step 2 Carefully remove the baking sheet from the broiler. Put the chicken cutlets on the sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top with the tomatoes, and broil one side only until the chicken is no longer pink in the center, rotating the pan if necessary for even cooking, 5 to 10 minutes. Grate the mozzarella and Parmesan. Strip 16 to 20 basil leaves from the stems. Combine the bread crumbs, mozzarella, and Parmesan in a small bowl.

Step 3 When the chicken is cooked through, remove the baking sheet from the broiler. Lay the basil leaves on top of the tomatoes, sprinkle with the bread crumb and cheese mixture, and drizzle with 3 tablespoons olive oil.

Step 4 Return to the broiler, and cook until the bread crumbs and cheese are browned and bubbly, 2 to 4 minutes. Serve with a tossed salad.

Variation: Cubano Chicken Use sliced dill pickles instead of the tomatoes and Swiss cheese instead of the mozzarella. Omit the basil. Before putting the pickles on top of the chicken in Step 2, spread a little Dijon mustard on the cutlets. Instead of the Parmesan, mix 1/2 cup chopped ham into the bread crumb and Swiss topping.

Variation: Fastest Eggplant Parm Instead of the chicken, slice about 2 pounds large eggplant crosswise 1 inch thick. After the pan heats in Step 2, spread out the eggplant slices but not the tomatoes and turn to coat them in

some oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Broil until softened and browned in places, about 3 to 5 minutes. Flip the eggplant, then top with the tomatoes and proceed with the recipe from the end of Step 2.

"The prolific Mark Bittman returns with a doorstop whose recipes neatly break down ingredients, prep and cook steps, variations and shortcuts, and suggested sides...Prediction: This book will be a standard gift for new cooks and off-to-college kids." —Scott Mowbray, *Cooking Light*

"New York Times food writer Bittman returns with his How to Cook series, this time focusing on recipes that consider preparation time. Bittman believes we all have time to cook, we just need better recipes—and he does an excellent job of providing these dishes...At over a thousand pages, Bittman has delivered another brilliant, comprehensive reference." —Publishers Weekly, starred review

"He's been teaching us how to cook delicious food for years, and now Mark Bittman continues the tradition with a focus on innovative, quick meals. His newest project is so much more than your typical cookbook; it's a lifestyle guide for reinventing the efficiency with which we eat great food. Mark Bittman is one of my heroes and everyone can stand to have a copy of his newest book in their collection." —MARIO BATALI, chef, author, and entrepreneur

"In *How to Cook Everything Fast*, Mark Bittman provides the reader with tools missing in most people's cooking repertoire: intuition and common sense. Read, cook, and repeat." —TOM COLICCHIO, chef and owner of Craft Restaurants

"Cook AND Fast in the same title? Mark Bittman makes it possible to do both with delicious, healthy recipes that you can pull together quickly. This should be the go-to cookbook for anyone interested in returning to preparing real food for themselves and their families." —KATIE COURIC, global anchor for Yahoo! News and New York Times best-selling author

"Who wouldn't like to make life easier in the kitchen? With hundreds of leisurely recipes, tips, methods, and instructions, Mark Bittman cooks next to you for a faster, effortless, and delicious outcome." —JACQUES PÉPIN, cookbook author, teacher, and host of numerous PBS-TV cooking series

"This is the most user-friendly cookbook for modern-day living I've ever seen. Damn you, Bittman! Now I have no excuse left to order takeout." —MEREDITH VIEIRA, award-winning journalist and host of *The Meredith Vieira Show*

MARK BITTMAN is the author of 20 acclaimed books, including the *How to Cook Everything* series, the award-winning *Food Matters*, and the New York Times number-one bestseller, *VB6: Eat Vegan*

Before 6:00. For more than two decades his popular and compelling stories appeared in the Times, where he was ultimately the lead food writer for the Sunday magazine and became the country's first food-focused Op-Ed columnist for a major news publication. Bittman has starred in four television series, including Showtime's Emmy-winning *Years of Living Dangerously*. He has written for nearly every major newspaper in the United States and many magazines, and has spoken at dozens of universities and conferences; his 2007 TED talk has had more than a million views. In 2015 he was a distinguished fellow at the University of California, Berkeley; he is currently a fellow at the Union of Concerned Scientists. Throughout his career Bittman has strived for the same goal: to make food, in all its aspects, understandable. He can be found at markbittman.com, @bittman on Twitter, and @markbittman on Instagram. ^ ^

I'm a big fan of Mark Bittman and his crusade to get America cooking at home, and *How to Cook Everything Fast* is going to be a real help to get people doing just that. This isn't just a collection of recipes - it's an explanation of the process of cooking faster. All the little things that an experienced home cook does without even thinking about it, plus a lot of tricks and shortcuts that even experienced cooks aren't likely to know all of them. The title of the book might make you think that this is just another collection of quick recipes, but there's actually a lot more than that going on here. You see, an experienced home cook does a lot of things automatically without thinking about it. You rearrange steps, you prep this while that cooks, you do this while the water is coming to a boil, and so on. What's special about this book is that he writes up each recipe in a prep/cook format that builds the prep into the recipe for maximum efficiency. For a newer cook, I can see how this would really speed up the learning curve. Even for an experienced cook, he throws in some ideas that new (to me at least!), like using the broiler to heat oil on a pan for faster baking. I've made a few recipes from this already (a few have been available around the web for awhile). The Fast Chicken Parmesan was the first one I made. Most recipes for this take about an hour, this one took me 28 minutes, and probably would have been a few minutes less except I used fresh mozzarella so I couldn't grate it and had to cut it into slices, that probably added a couple minutes. My husband and family really liked it, I would probably use a little less oil in it next time but I liked it too. It's not like a traditional chicken parmesan, this is layered with tomatoes, basil, cheese & bread crumbs instead of dredging it in egg and breading. The next recipe I made from this was the White Beans with Sausage, Greens, and Garlic, (you can find it in the preview if you want to try before you buy) and oh WOW this was really good and really fast - 22 minutes! I made it with spinach, and this made a delicious, brothy lunch dish. My 14 year old daughter ate it too, and when I

said I liked it, she said, "Well, yeah, it's Mark Bittman, of course it's good." :-) Another thing to note - it said it made four servings, but with both this and the Fast Chicken Parm, I thought they were awfully big servings. The bean dish made six servings of the size we ate - about a cereal bowl full each. Men and teenagers may find the servings run true to size, but I think a lot of us will find the servings very large. One thing that may be different for a lot of people - you are moving all the time when you make these recipes. Because the prep steps are built in to the recipe instead of all done before hand, you have to hustle a bit. The trade-off here is that you work a bit, but then you get a good meal faster than you can get a bad one - seriously, I can't drive to the nearest fast-food place and get burgers in 22 minutes or less, and the homemade food is a LOT cheaper and healthier!!

I was also curious to see how this book would 'sync up' with Mark Bittman's recent VB6 idea, to eat less animal foods. I was pleased to see that there are a lot of 'less-meat' recipes and a lot of meatless recipes, but there is plenty here for the straight-up carnivore too. A lot of the meat recipes also use a good amount of veg - it looks like he went for a ratio of at least 1 pound (or more!) of veg to every 2 pounds of meat in a lot of the meat-heavy recipes, so you'll see things like Chicken with Creamed Spinach with 2 pounds chicken to 1 1/2 pounds spinach, or Five-Spice Pork Meatballs with Bok Choy with 1 pound ground pork to 1 1/2 pounds bok choy. A couple little warnings - no cookbook is for everyone, after all. If you are the kind of person who just CAN'T follow directions, this may be a bit tough for you. I learned this with the Fast Chicken Parm - my substitution of fresh mozzarella for regular definitely added some time to the cooking. I think you can tweak things once you kinda see what he is doing here, but I'd really recommend following the recipes as written at least the first time, especially if you are not a very experienced cook. I also find that he always uses more oil and fresh herbs than I can handle as a Midwestern gal - still getting used to EATING the parsley here, not just letting it sit on the side of the plate, so using handfuls of it in one recipe is more than I can handle, LOL!! But, we all have our preferences - you'll know your own, just adjust as you need to. I think this book will be most useful for busy people - working moms take note. The vast majority of the recipes are main dishes, always with suggestions of SIMPLE sides, suitable for a weeknight after work. For example - a lot of the time, he suggests very similar sides - Bruschetta, Warm Buttery Bread, simple noodles, a simple veg, a green salad. It's all about making it easy to come home and make something decent and wholesome without killing yourself, it's not about whipping up a gourmet feast that will impress your chef friends. Finally, for all of you who like to read cookbooks (and I know I'm not the only one!), there are a lot of sidebars and variations in this book, same as all of Bittman's other books. There are a number of Master Recipes, focus pages on one particular ingredient, explanations of technique scattered through - you won't find a list of these

except in the BACK of the book, but I'd encourage you to seek them out! There's one for making your own deli-style meats that I really need to try some weekend. I'd recommend this to anyone who wants or needs to cook on a daily basis, this is bound to save you time and taste great!

It takes a formidable cookbook to gain entry to my kitchen. Counter and shelf space is limited. I doubted a cookbook this year would make the cut. Then *How to Cook Everything Fast* came along, and now it's in the kitchen--which makes sense because some of my other books in the kitchen are Mark Bittman books. *How to Cook Everything Fast* is a veritable encyclopedia of how to get anything on the table in less time. With this book, you'll be able to fix something to eat much faster than by calling and waiting for takeout. It is a sturdy, hardbound book that lies open without the aid of a cookbook stand so that you can toss it on the counter and cook from it. The type for the actual recipes is a bit larger than I am accustomed to in my other cookbooks which is a huge perk. Those of you who buy cookbooks for the pictures will be a tad disappointed. In the tradition of Bittman's other "How to Cook Everything", you'll find a few sparse, line drawings. Bittman's recipes need no pictures. He is a concise and clear recipe author. Another reviewer noted this book might not be for a beginner cook or someone who has a difficult time with directions. I agree. Bittman uses the principle of multi-tasking to get food on the table more quickly. The recipes use both blue and black type. The black type is an actual cooking step while the blue type directs you to prep another ingredient while your dish cooks. It's a terrific layout that illustrates how a seasoned home cook gets food on the table. Think of how often you chop veggies while your pasta water is boiling, and you'll get the picture. He also utilizes some different cooking techniques to streamline the process or add flavor to your food such as putting a little oil in the bottom of a roasting pan to get a nice sear on your meat. I had a dozen "Why didn't I think of that?" moments when I paged through the book for the first time. Bittman also includes a terrific intro in the book that includes a handy substitution guide, the quickest methods to cut fruits and veggies, how to store pantry staples, what convenience items are worth the price, and how to reorganize your kitchen for speed. There is a short introduction before each recipe, and at the end of each recipe are lists of variations, suggestions to make the recipe faster or in some instances more leisurely (if you have extra time), and side suggestions. The ingredients are run of the mill, mostly whole foods that can be picked up at any supermarket chain. You will find that the end product may not be completely identical to the original will be just as flavorful. Recipes range from the practical (pizza wedges, creamed spinach, fish and chips) to the more updated (goat cheese truffles, cheddar waffles with bacon maple syrup, herb-rubbed leg of lamb with chopped Greek salad). There is something in this book for

everyone! Sections include: salads; sandwiches, soups and stews; pasta and noodles; rice and grains; vegetables; beans and tofu; seafood; chicken; meat; breakfast; appetizers; sides; dessert. The index is wonderfully done. I applaud the ease of use. One can use the traditional index or the vegetarian index. There is also a separate index for "kitchen notes" if you wish to brush up on a kitchen technique and an index for "fast navigation". I can't say enough about the features packed into this book. I was absolutely floored by the pumpkin mousse. Having made a very technical mousse for a birthday party recently, the pumpkin mousse recipe was streamlined and a reminder of why fall is my favorite cooking season. The rosemary popcorn is also a new favorite. I also want to add that I have never had a Bittman recipe fail, and even top tier chefs deliver a flop every now and then! The bottom line? I could have written a ten page essay on why this book is a must have in your kitchen. You will not find a more useful or informative cookbook on the new release table this fall. Buy it and enjoy it!

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