

# Cooking with Fresh Herbs

This playbook provides detailed steps on selecting, storing, and cooking with fresh herbs to enhance the flavor of dishes. It offers best practices for handling herbs from the garden or grocery to the kitchen.

## Step 1: **Selection**

Choose fresh herbs that look vibrant and green, without any brown spots or wilting. Smell the herbs to ensure they're fragrant, which is a good indication of freshness.

## Step 2: **Storage**

To store fresh herbs, wash and pat them dry. Then, wrap the herbs in a damp paper towel and place them inside a resealable plastic bag or in an airtight container. Keep them in the refrigerator.

## Step 3: **Preparation**

Before cooking, prepare the herbs by gently rinsing under cool water and patting dry. If needed, remove the leaves from the stems, and chop or mince the herbs as your recipe dictates.

## Step 4: **Cooking**

Incorporate herbs into your cooking with timing in mind:

- For hearty herbs (like rosemary, thyme, or sage), add them early in the cooking process so their flavor has time to infuse.
- Delicate herbs (like basil, cilantro, or parsley), should be added

towards the end of cooking or sprinkled on top of the dish just before serving to preserve their flavor and color.

## **General Notes**

### **Herb Pairings**

Familiarize yourself with herb and food pairings. For example, basil pairs well with tomatoes, cilantro compliments spicy dishes, and rosemary enhances meats and potatoes.

### **Intensity**

Be mindful of the intensity of herbs. Some, like oregano, are very potent and should be used sparingly. Others, like parsley, can be used more liberally.