



# Blanching 101: How to Blanch Vegetables and Fruits

By Mary Margaret Chappell  
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Want to speed up your prep work, shorten your time in the kitchen, and make your fresh produce last longer in the fridge? Then it's time to make blanching a part of your [plant-based](#) cooking routine.

## What Is Blanching?

Blanching is a cooking technique that calls for quickly scalding foods in boiling water, and then immediately dunking or “shocking” them in ice water to keep them from overcooking. The process seals in color, flavor, and texture by halting the enzyme activity that occurs naturally in fruits and vegetables when raw. Blanching is also used on tomatoes, peaches, and almonds to loosen their skins (without cooking them through) so they're easier to peel.

## When Should You Blanch?

Making a smooth tomato sauce? Drop those tomatoes in boiling water so you can just slip off their skins. Don't know how to fit that big bunch of kale into your crisper drawer? Shrink it down with a quick plunge in the blanching pot. Got a garden (or CSA box) overflowing with fresh vegetables? Blanch and freeze for future use. Like your vegetables crisp-tender? Scald and shock them before reheating so that they hold their texture. Busy week ahead? Speed things up at dinnertime and keep your produce from going limp by having all your veggies blanched and ready to reheat.

## How to Blanch: 3 Easy Steps

1. Bring 1 gallon of water per pound of produce (or 2 gallons of water per pound of voluminous leafy greens) to a rapid boil in a large covered pot. If you have a pasta pot with a perforated insert, this is a good time to use it. Alternately, have tongs, a slotted spoon, or a colander ready for draining the blanched foods. Fill a sink or a large mixing bowl with very cold (or ice) water.
2. Plunge food into the boiling water. Cover, and when the water returns to a boil, cook for the recommended time (see below).
3. Drain the blanched items, and immediately dunk/shock them in the cold/ice water until completely cooled (this will take roughly the same amount of time they spent in boiling water). Drain well before using.

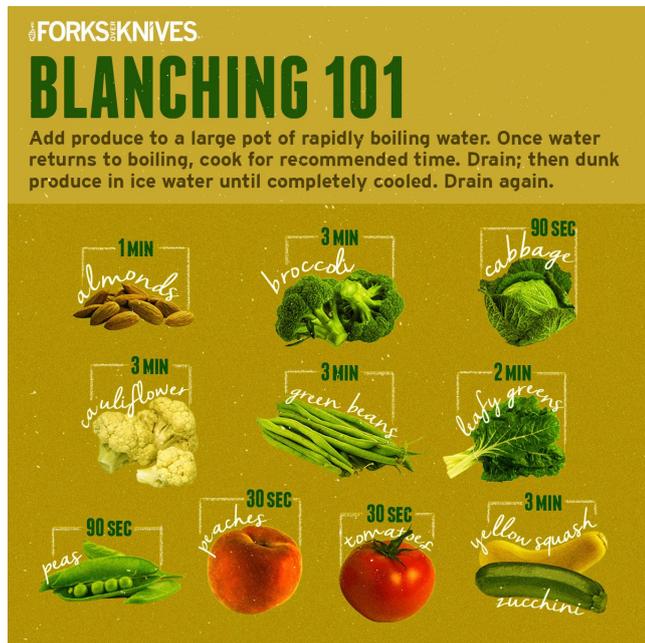
## Best Foods to Blanch

- Almonds (1 minute)
- Broccoli florets (3 minutes)
- Cabbage (90 seconds)
- Cauliflower florets (3 minutes)
- Green beans (3 minutes)
- Leafy greens (2 minutes)
- Peas (90 seconds)
- Peaches (30 seconds)
- Tomatoes (30 seconds)
- Zucchini, yellow squash (3 minutes)

(continued)

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Scroll down for a video on blanching from the [Forks Over Knives cooking course](#) on Rouxbe.