

Scaling Recipes

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About the Allrecipes Scaling Feature

The staff of Allrecipes is excited to introduce a new scaling feature, one that many cooks on the Allrecipes network have been asking for. If you've ever altered a recipe to get a different yield, then you're familiar with scaling, or, at least, the need to scale. Scaling is a wonderful way to adjust the number of servings that a recipe yields-it's simply the process of changing a recipe's yield by multiplying or dividing the recipe's ingredients. Rest assured that successful scaling can be a simple, undaunting process. Using a reasonable scaling factor and following some of these other scaling guidelines will help make a successful, flexible meal planner out of you in no time!

How It Works

The new scaling feature at Allrecipes is easy to use, letting you quickly adjust recipes for your immediate meal-planning needs. Every recipe includes serving estimates; this number represents the number of people the recipe is designed to serve. All you need to do to change that amount is to type in the number of servings you wish to make. The automatic scaling will change the amounts for a recipe in the ingredients list only, leaving the directions to the original wording. So be sure to keep that in mind as you follow the directions for a recipe you've scaled.

Things to Consider Adjusting When Scaling

Whenever you alter the amounts of ingredients for a given recipe, you may also need to adjust the cooking temperature, cooking time, pan size and seasonings. Here are tips on how to adjust for these when scaling a recipe:

Cooking temperature: Use the original cooking temperature as a reference point, monitoring closely for the results you are looking for. If you know the internal temperature that your food needs to reach, remember to check for that, too. When cooking more than one dish in the oven at the same time, allow for more cooking time and raise the temperature by about 25 degrees.

Cooking time: Use the original cooking time as a reference point for how long you should cook the altered recipe, monitoring closely for the results you are looking for. If you are baking half a recipe of cake, bread or pie, then the cooking time will be more than half-about two-thirds to three-quarters.

Pan size: Your best choice is the pan that comes closest to keeping the ingredients to the same depth as the pan originally called for. If you are halving or doubling a recipe, use a pan that has half or double the volume of the one called for in the original recipe.

If you cannot keep the pan contents to the original depth, then adjust the time, temperature and amount of liquid accordingly. When the contents are deeper for dishes that have a lot of liquid, increase the time and use a little less liquid. When they are deeper for baked goods, increase the time and lower the temperature slightly. When the contents are shallower for dishes that have a lot of liquid, shorten the cooking time and add a little more liquid. When they are shallower for baked goods, shorten the time and raise the temperature a bit.

Seasonings: Season to taste, slowly, tasting after each time you add more. If you are doubling a recipe, expect to use only about 1-1/2 times the original amount of seasonings. If you are tripling a recipe, expect to use only about twice the original amount of seasonings. If you are dividing a recipe in half or to one-third, then use a little less than half or a third of the original amount of seasonings.

Some Exceptions to How Scaling Works

For food chemistry reasons, scaling does not work well for some recipes. Recipes that do not scale well are delicate foods such as soufflés, baked items requiring yeast such as breads, and recipes that prepare

a single large item that is meant to be later divided into smaller portions such as cakes, pies, breads and whole turkey.

For recipes that do not scale well, all the ingredient amounts can be scaled (multiplied or divided) so that you can have a useful shopping list, but you should still prepare the recipe in separate batches according to the original directions. In other words, instead of attempting to make a giant soufflé for a large party, you should make several soufflés by repeating the process of making one soufflé according to the original directions.

Recipes Cannot Be Scaled Indefinitely

You should avoid scaling a recipe indefinitely. In fact, it's best to increase or decrease a recipe by multiplying or dividing by any number under 4. Some cooks are even more cautious than that and stay strictly within a factor of 2. If you really must make a lot of a particular dish, you can cook in separate batches. Or if you must make quite a bit less than what a recipe originally yields, consider making all or even half of it and save the rest for another time in the refrigerator or freezer. Although recipes are not indefinitely scalable, you'll find that these guidelines will give you a reliable framework for successful, flexible meal planning.

<http://allrecipes.com/help/recipeinfo/scaling.aspx> May 1, 2014