

freeze'em

Egg whites keep for a few weeks when stored in an airtight container in the freezer.

terms to know

It used to be that the only decision you needed to make was if you wanted medium, large, X-large or jumbo. Now you practically need a field guide to get out of the grocery store. Here's a little help:

CAGE-FREE The hens aren't confined to cages, though that doesn't necessarily mean they see the light of day.

FREE-RANGE In addition to being cage-free, this typically means the hens have access to outdoors, but there's no regulation of how much or when. These eggs have deep yellow yolks and richer flavor.

ORGANIC In addition to being cage-free and free-range, to get this classification hens eat only organic vegetarian feed that lacks any antibiotics or hormones. They may cost more but are healthier.

separation anxiety?

To separate an egg, crack it open over an empty bowl rather than into a pan or batter, so you can catch shells or yolk drips. Plus, you'll be able to see if the egg is fresh. An egg with a prominent chalaza (the small white lump or ballstone near the yolk) is a fresh egg. Pass the yolk between two shell halves, so the egg white falls into the bowl.

tips

BE COLOR-BLIND Depending on what part of the country you live in, you may find different colored eggs—everything from white to brown to blue. In general, the taste is the same.

The only difference is the type of hen that lays the egg.

CHECK THE GRADE In addition to the size, an egg carton also carries a grade of AA, A or B. To get the highest-quality grade (AA), an egg must have an unblemished shell and be perfectly oval, and the air-filled pocket between the white and shell at the large end of the egg cannot exceed one-eighth inch in depth and should be about the size of a dime. Skip the B-grades—you're slumming it freshness-wise.

SHOCK THEM Immediately after hard-boiling an egg, drop it carefully in ice-cold water. This helps separate the egg from the shell, making for easier peeling. Older eggs are easier to peel too.

WHIP THEM GOOD If a recipe calls for whipped egg whites, bring them to room temperature first for the best results.

EGG BEATERS Thought they were fake? They're actually egg whites fortified with vitamins and minerals—without the yolk, there's naturally very little fat and cholesterol in the egg product. But to get their eggy color, they're enriched with beta-carotene. [n]

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cooking basics

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HARD-BOILED	Fill saucepan with 1 inch of water. Heat eggs on medium-high 'til you see bubbles. Then remove from heat and cover.	Keep the pan covered 11 minutes for a tender yolk, 12 to 15 minutes for a firm yolk. Set eggs in a dish of ice water after cooking.	Tap large end of shell with a spoon. Return egg to bowl until cool; roll shell on work surface to crack. Peel under cool water.	A '70s comfort food, deviled eggs are back in vogue. Add new fixings like smoked salmon or sun-dried tomatoes.
POACHED	Fill pan with 4 inches of water. Add 3 Tbl. of white wine vinegar. Bring to a boil. Add cracked eggs.	Cook for 30 seconds. Lift out egg and press it lightly (it should bounce back slightly when it's done).	Use a slotted spoon to lift out the egg. Serve ASAP or transfer to a bowl of ice water; let sit 10 minutes.	Top poached eggs with tomato sauce and a grilled portobello mushroom in lieu of hollandaise sauce.
FRIED	Heat skillet on medium-low heat until just warm, brush with butter and add eggs one at a time.	Cook 4 to 5 minutes. Like your eggs cooked through on top? Cover the pan for the last minute.	Slide them out of the pan with a large flat spatula, and season with salt and pepper before serving.	Bake a pizza with your favorite breakfast ingredients (bacon!) and top with a fried egg.
SCRAMBLED	Melt 3 Tbl. butter in a pan over low heat. Break 4 to 6 eggs in a bowl, beat lightly with a fork and add to pan.	Stir eggs for 3 minutes or so in the pan to become set. Prefer firmer eggs? Cook 2 more minutes.	When eggs are done to your liking, mix in 2 Tbl. light cream or butter. Season with salt and pepper.	Take a cue from Chinese cuisine and stir-fry rice with veggies and scrambled eggs.



tip [Whip your eggs into shape

with the Zak! Designs Shake Me Egg Shaker, \$13, KitchenKapers.com]