

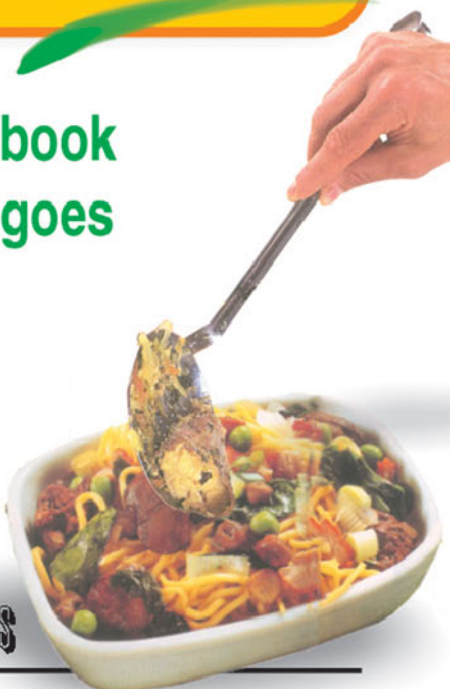


Deepa S. Phatak  
Shyam Phatak



# COOKING MADE EASY

The ideal cookery book  
for beginners that goes  
beyond cooking



V&S PUBLISHERS

# *COOKING*

## *Made Easy*

Deepa S. Phatak  
Shyam Phatak



*Published by:*



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# PREFACE

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*He who knows not and knows that he knows not,  
he is simple – teach him.*

This book is for beginners. It's for people who do not know anything about cooking. And for persons who are fed up of eating out all the time!

This book is also for:

1. The person who loves to eat but can't cook.
2. The person who is hungry for good food and good health.
3. The person who wants to eat better but does not know how to go about it.
4. The working bachelor who does not like to eat out everyday.
5. The working bachelor who likes to eat out everyday but can't afford to!
6. The smart working woman (unmarried, of course!) who is not yet smart enough to cook or smart in cooking.
7. The harassed housewife who cares for the health of her family but has very little time to cook (thanks to her little kids!).
8. The harassed working woman (married, of course!) who is keen to keep her family healthy and happy but has to distribute her scarce time among the husband, the kids, her work and good food.
9. The newly married woman who has been told by her mother that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, but does not know the exact route to her husband's tummy.

10. The smart savvy professional who believes that he or she can do anything – except cooking, because it takes too long.

This book is not for:

1. Culinary queens who know a lot about cooking and teaching.
2. The experienced critic who may not cook but sure as hell knows how to criticise!
3. The 5-star chefs at 5-star (or 7-star!) hotels who seem to have nothing else to do but cook, cook, cook.

In short, this book is for you and me!

**—Shyam Phatak**

## Identifying the Ingredients

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To know how to cook, first you must know what to cook.

### What are cereals?

Cereals are grains such as rice, wheat, maize, millet etc.

Rice can be cooked rice, boiled rice, puffed rice (also known as *muri*), beaten or flattened rice (also called *poha* or *chira*), or popped rice (also termed *lahya* or *khoi*). Different varieties of rice are available in the market. Basmati rice (a variety of long, pleasant smelling rice) is used for making *pulao* or fried rice. Rice flour is also known as *suji* and is used in a number of preparations.



Wheat flour is known as *maida*. Wheat flour is used for making chapattis, rotis, puris, naans, paranthas, bread, buns etc.

Durum wheat or hard wheat (also known as *rava* or *suji*) is used for making pasta such as spaghetti and macaroni, as well as puddings, breakfast cereals and semolina, while club wheat (a softer wheat that's low in protein) is used for pastry flour.

### What are pulses?

The edible seeds of beans and peas are known as pulses. Pulses are dals such as black gram or urad dal, red gram or tur dal, Bengal gram or channa dal, green gram or moong dal, kidney beans or rajma etc.



## **Vegetables**

Vegetables are different parts of plants generally used for food. Vegetables could be roots, tubers, stems, leaves, and even some fruits like tomatoes, chillies, pumpkins etc.

**Leafy:** Cabbage or gobi, lettuce, mustard leaves or sarson ka saag, spinach or palak, mint leaves or pudina etc.

**Others:** Ash gourd or white pumpkin, brinjal or eggplant (also called aubergine or baingan), cauliflower or phool gobi, beans, peas or mattar, ladies' fingers or bhindi, snake gourd or parval, bitter gourd or karela, tomato or tamatar, pumpkin or sitaphal, capsicum or green pepper or Shimla mirch etc.

**Roots and Tubers:** Carrot, beetroot, radish, sweet potato, potato, onion, tapioca, turnips, yam etc. They are all a part of the vegetable family.

## **Fruits**

A fruit is the part of a flowering plant that contains the plant's seeds. However, the word 'fruit' commonly refers to the juicy, sweet or tart (sour) kinds that people enjoy as desserts or snacks. Fruit juices as beverages are also very popular. The word 'fruit' comes from the Latin word *frui*, meaning *enjoy*, derived from the Latin *fructus*, denoting *enjoyment of produce or harvest*. Popular fruits include apples, bananas, mangoes, guavas, grapes, oranges, peaches, papayas, pears, strawberries, jack fruits, watermelons, pineapples, pomegranates, grapefruit (mosambi), sapota (chickoo), blue berries (jamoon) etc.

## **Nuts**

Nut is the popular name for many kinds of dry, edible seeds or fruits that grow in a woody shell. Nuts are eaten as snacks or as flavouring agents in food. Almonds, pistachio, cashew nuts, groundnuts or peanuts, walnuts etc. are some of the popular nuts. Coconuts are also well known.

## **What are condiments and spices?**

Condiments and spices, many of which are aromatic, give a relish or flavour to food and are used as seasoning materials. Green raw chillies or hari mirch, red dried chillies or lal mirch

(generally used in powder form), coriander leaves, coriander seeds or dhania, cumin seeds or jeera, fenugreek seeds (or fennel) or methi, garlic or lasun, ginger or adrak, mustard or rai, nutmeg or jaiphal, pepper corns or kali mirch, tamarind or imli, turmeric or haldi, aniseed or saunf, thymol or ajwain (or om), clove or laung, cardamom or elaichi, asafoetida or hing, saffron or kesar, bay leaf or tejpatta, cinnamon or dalchini, curry leaves or kadi patta, dry mango powder (powder made out of dehydrated green mangoes) or amchur, sesame seeds or til, vinegar (a sour liquid made from diluted acetic acid) etc. are some of the seasoning ingredients.

Garam masala powder is a mixture of various aromatic spices dried and ground into powder. This is available as a readymade item sold in packets.

Sugar or chini (or shakkar), jaggery or gur and salt or namak are also used in most preparations to give them a better taste and flavour.

## **What is meat?**

Meat is animal flesh that is eaten as food. These domesticated animals and the meats that come from them are cattle (beef and veal), pigs (pork), sheep (mutton and lamb), and poultry (chicken, duck, turkey). Game (meat from wild animals) is also eaten, although this is banned under the Indian Wildlife Act. Fish can also be classified as meat.

**Kinds of meat:** There are several different types of red meat. The names for meat from cattle and sheep reveal the age of the animal from which the meat has been procured.

Veal is the flesh of calves less than 14 weeks old. It is light pink and contains little fat. Veal is more tender than beef and has a milder flavour.

Beef is the flesh of full-grown cattle. Most beef sold in shops comes from animals one to two years old. Beef is bright red and has white fat. Flecks of fat called marbling help make beef tasty and juicy.

Lamb is the flesh of sheep less than one year old. It is red and has white fat. Lamb has a milder taste than mutton.

Mutton is the flesh of sheep over one year old. It has a deep red to purple colour. Mutton has a stronger flavour and a coarser texture than lamb.

Pork is the flesh of pigs. Most pork comes from animals four to seven months old. Pork has a light pink colour with white fat. It has a mild taste. Many cured (preserved) meats, such as ham, bacon and sausages are made from pork.

Poultry meat is white meat. Chickens raised or bred for meat are called *broilers* while chickens bred for eggs are called *layers*.

Meat is available as fresh meat, frozen meat, canned meat and cured meat (treated with salt and sodium nitrate for preservation).

Offal is the general term for various organs and glands of animals. Common offal includes the brains, hearts, kidneys, livers and tongues of animals.

There are many kinds of fish. Fish such as anchovies, capelin, herring, mackerel, sardines and tuna are caught near the surface of oceans. Fish like cod, flounder, hake and pollock are harvested near the ocean floor. Freshwater fish, such as carp, catfish and whitefish, are caught in inland waters or raised on fish farms. Clams, crabs, lobsters, oysters, scallops and shrimps are called shellfish. Fish are available as fresh fish, frozen fish, canned fish and cured (preserved) fish.

## **What are dairy products?**

Dairy products are milk and milk products such as yoghurt (curd) or dahi, buttermilk or lassi, butter, clarified butter or ghee, cheese, cottage cheese or paneer, and cream.

### **Eggs**

Eggs are also an important source of food. Chicken eggs are the most popular. In some countries, eggs of other birds, some kinds of fish and reptiles are also relished.

### **Beverages**

Beverages such as tea, coffee, cocoa, milk and fruit juices are consumed all over the world. Beverages can be hot or cold.