

How to Make Your Own Butter

Making your own butter is one of the few culinary feats that are incredibly impressive and embarrassingly easy. One of the clear benefits to making your own butter, aside from the ego boost, is that you will be able to see first hand what goes into your butter. No pesticides and only the finest ingredients. You can even use your butter to create custom compound butters for sautéing, baking and garnishing.

Basic materials and ingredients needed to make your own butter:

- fine mesh strainer
- electric mixer
- spatula
- pitcher
- organic cream
- garnish

How to make your own butter from scratch

All you need to make your own, homemade, fresh, organic butter is an electric mixer, organic cream and a few simple kitchen utensils. You may want to gather some herbs or edible flowers to flavor and decorate your finished product.

The best cream to use for making butter has a fat content of at least 35 percent. When buying your cream, remember that the recipe will yield half as much butter as the amount of cream used. A single quart of cream will produce 1 pound of butter and 2 cups of buttermilk.

To begin, pour the cream into a large bowl and churn with the electric mixer on a medium speed. First, the cream will morph into a thick whipped cream and then you will start to see it stiffen. This initial process takes just under ten minutes.

As you keep beating, the cream will lose volume and start to look curdled. Once the solid butter has fully separated from the buttermilk, you are ready to strain it.

Place a fine mesh strainer over a deep bowl and pour in your blended contents. The buttermilk will pool into the bowl and you can then transfer it to a carafe or pitcher.

Knead the butter either with a spatula or your hands, gently pressing out all of the remaining buttermilk. Rinse the butter with ice water until it runs clear. This process helps preserve your butter longer. Press the butter in the strainer until it is mostly dried. At this point, you can either mix ½ tsp. to 1 tsp. of salt into the butter, tasting as you go to avoid over-salting. Some experts recommend waiting to salt the butter until right before it is used.

Prepare your butter for presentation by garnishing it with edible flowers like nasturtiums or violets. You can also press fresh herbs like thyme, sage or chives on the surface of your butter for a touch of elegance. Wrap your butter in parchment paper, which it will not stick to and store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Recipes for homemade compound butter

A compound butter can add tremendous flavor to any dish. There are several combinations to try, including:

1. Chopped herb and garlic butter

The possibilities for cooking with chopped herb butter are endless. Combine the butter with freshly cooked pasta, spread onto plain dinner rolls or use it to season mashed potatoes. Combine any herbs you like, some suggestions include fresh thyme, rosemary and sage.

2. Honey butter

Honey butter is fantastic to bake with. Simply mix 1 tbsp. of honey into ½ cup of butter and enjoy with pancakes, baked goods or and surprisingly it goes well with eggs.