

KITCHEN PRACTICE · FREE CHART

# The Cooking Oil & Smoke Point Chart

Smoke point, refining state and fatty-acid profile for fifteen everyday oils, matched to a cooking-method decision table — so the right fat meets the right pan temperature instead of burning or oxidising.

- 15 oils scored
- Smoke point vs stability
- Method decision table
- EVOO myth-buster
- 3-page A4 printable PDF

CLINICAL RATIONALE — WHY THIS SPECIFIC TOOL

Smoke point is the temperature at which an oil visibly breaks down and burns — but it is only half the story. The other half is oxidative stability: how resistant the fat is to damage at heat, which is set by its fatty-acid profile and antioxidants.

**Profile beats smoke point.** Saturated and monounsaturated fats are chemically stable at heat; polyunsaturated fats (PUFA) oxidise readily even below their smoke point. That is why a high-PUFA oil that "can take" the heat on paper is still a poor frying choice.

**Refining raises the smoke point.** Refining strips free fatty acids and impurities, pushing the smoke point up and the flavour down. Virgin and unrefined oils keep flavour and antioxidants but burn sooner — match them to lower heat or finishing.

**Olive oil is more stable than its reputation.** Extra-virgin olive oil is high in monounsaturated fat and polyphenols, and studies of oils under frying conditions repeatedly rank it among the most stable. The "never cook with olive oil" rule is a myth.

| AUTHORITY / EVIDENCE BASE      | WHAT IT ESTABLISHES FOR THIS TOOL                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fatty-acid oxidation chemistry | PUFA oxidise at heat far below their smoke point; SFA/MUFA resist it — profile sets true stability.               |
| Oil stability trials           | Extra-virgin olive oil shows low oxidation products under pan and frying temperatures versus high-PUFA seed oils. |
| Smoke point reference data     | Refining raises smoke point; unrefined and nut oils are the lowest and belong at finishing, not frying.           |

QUICK START — THE NEXT TEN MINUTES

- 1

**Know your pan temperature**  
Sauté sits around 250–350 °F; stir-fry and searing run 400–450 °F; deep frying 350–450 °F. Pick the oil above your pan, not below it.
- 2

**Keep two bottles, not ten**  
A high-heat MUFA oil (avocado, refined olive, peanut) plus an extra-virgin for finishing covers almost every meal.
- 3

**Retire the high-PUFA fryers**  
Flax and walnut never see heat; generic soybean and corn are baking fats at best.
- 4

**Store against oxidation**  
Cool, dark, tightly capped. A rancid oil is oxidised before it ever meets the pan.

SMOKE IS THE STOP SIGNAL

When an oil smokes it is releasing aldehydes and other oxidation products you do not want to breathe or eat. Ventilate, lower the heat, and start again with an oil rated above your pan temperature. Repeatedly re-heating any oil to smoke point degrades it; discard fry oil that has smoked.

READ THE FAT PROFILE, NOT JUST THE NUMBER

**SFA — SATURATED**  
Very stable at heat, but keep intake within guideline limits. Coconut, ghee, butter. Stable, not automatically "healthy".

**MUFA — MONOUNSATURATED**  
Stable and heart-friendly. Olive, avocado, peanut, high-oleic safflower and sunflower. The workhorse group for cooking.

**PUFA — POLYUNSATURATED**  
Oxidises readily at heat even below its smoke point. Soybean, corn, generic sunflower, walnut, flax. Reserve for low heat or cold.

THE EVOO MYTH-BUSTER

Extra-virgin olive oil is high in monounsaturated fat and polyphenols, and under pan and frying conditions it produces fewer oxidation products than high-PUFA seed oils. The "never cook with olive oil" rule confuses smoke point with stability. Sauté and roast with it freely; save deep-frying for the higher-rated oils and keep flax and walnut off the heat entirely.

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THE REFERENCE

Fifteen oils, then pick by method

Highest smoke point first. The profile column is the one that decides stability; the use column is the practical read.

| OIL                     | SMOKE °F | PROFILE | BEST USE                                              |
|-------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Avocado (refined)       | 520      | MUFA    | Sear, deep-fry, roast — the widest headroom.          |
| Safflower (high-oleic)  | 510      | MUFA    | High-heat frying and roasting.                        |
| Rice bran               | 490      | MUFA    | Stir-fry and deep-fry, neutral flavour.               |
| Ghee (clarified butter) | 485      | SFA     | High-heat sauté with butter flavour.                  |
| Olive (refined / light) | 465      | MUFA    | Roast and sauté where EVOO flavour is unwanted.       |
| Peanut                  | 450      | MUFA    | Stir-fry and deep-fry, classic wok oil.               |
| Sunflower (high-oleic)  | 450      | MUFA    | High-heat; choose high-oleic, not generic.            |
| Sesame (semi-refined)   | 410      | MUFA    | Stir-fry; toast-finish for flavour.                   |
| Virgin olive            | 410      | MUFA    | Sauté and medium roast.                               |
| Canola                  | 400      | MUFA    | All-purpose baking and sauté.                         |
| Coconut (refined)       | 400      | SFA     | Baking; stable but high in saturated fat.             |
| Extra-virgin olive      | 390      | MUFA    | Sauté, roast, and finish — more stable than its myth. |
| Butter                  | 300      | SFA     | Low-heat sauté and finishing; burns early.            |
| Walnut (unrefined)      | 320      | PUFA    | Finishing and dressings only — never heat.            |
| Flax (unrefined)        | 225      | PUFA    | Cold only; dressings and drizzling.                   |

Smoke points are typical values in °F; refining, age and brand shift them by tens of degrees. Use the chart to rank oils and set a ceiling, not as a laboratory figure.

PICK BY METHOD

| METHOD                 | PAN HEAT   | REACH FOR                                                  |
|------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Salad, drizzle, finish | no heat    | Extra-virgin olive, walnut, flax, toasted sesame           |
| Sauté, low-medium      | 250–350 °F | Extra-virgin or virgin olive, canola, butter               |
| Roast and bake         | 375–450 °F | Refined olive, avocado, canola, refined coconut            |
| Stir-fry and sear      | 400–450 °F | Peanut, sesame, rice bran, avocado, high-oleic sunflower   |
| Deep-fry               | 350–450 °F | Avocado, refined safflower or sunflower, rice bran, peanut |

OXIDATION STARTS BEFORE THE PAN

Light, heat and air degrade oil on the shelf. Buy in sizes you finish in months, keep bottles capped and out of the light, and never store nut or flax oil outside the fridge. A rancid oil is oxidised before cooking; sniff before use.

My two-bottle setup

High-heat bottle .....  
Finishing bottle .....  
One high-MUFA oil for the pan, one extra-virgin for the plate. Two bottles cover nearly every meal on this chart.

# Ready for the Complete Step-by-Step Blueprint?

This chart gives you the immediate tools to take action today. But long-term health requires a complete, structured daily system — one that tells you **what to do on the days this sheet does not cover**, in what order, and how to adjust when your body does not respond the way the chart says it should.

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- 1 **Budget-first shopping** — the anti-inflammatory pattern built around affordable, shelf-stable staples.

### THIS FREE TOOL VERSUS THE COMPLETE SYSTEM

#### What this free chart already gives you

- ☐ Fifteen oils scored by smoke point and stability
- ☐ A cooking-method decision table
- ☐ The EVOO myth-buster and storage rules

#### What only the 60-page edition has

- ☐ A full five-tier pantry, not just the fat shelf
- ☐ Twenty tested meal formulas with macros
- ☐ Evidence verdicts on the foods you were told to fear
- ☐ A budget-first shopping system for the whole pattern

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