Creative Food Preparation Techniques

Sometimes preparing food to be cooked can seem like a tedious job - one which takes up far too much time that you just don’t have. But there are ways to save time with your food prep so you can spend more time with your family. Check out these creative food preparation techniques to help you get the job done right.

1. Peeling garlic cloves - Lay the clove on the cutting board and place the side of your knife over the garlic. Hit the knife and therefore the clove with the heel of your hand and enough force on the clove to make the skin fall right off.

2. Need to peel multiple garlic cloves? Hit the head of the garlic with the heel of your hand to get the cloves, then put all the cloves in a mixing bowl. Cover with a second mixing bowl and shake vigorously. You’ll have these cloves peeled in less than ten seconds.

3. Shucking ears of corn - No longer do you have to sit there and peel ears of corn and pull off every little hairy strand to get a nice, clean ear of corn for cooking. Put two ears of corn in the microwave with the husks still on and microwave for 8 minutes. Remove with a pot holder, cut off one end (the end without the stringy parts), then simply squeeze the ear of corn right out of its husk, silky pieces and all.

4. Removing tough stems - You don’t even need a knife to separate those tough stems from vegetables like kale, collard greens, and chard. With one hand, hold a leaf at the bottom by the thickest part of the stem. Use your other hand to gently pinch the leaf with your index finger and thumb, and then pull it up and off along the stem.

5. Peeling pearl onions - These little devils can be a royal pain to peel. Well, not anymore. Chop off the tip of the onion - the end opposite the root end. Cook in boiling water for two minutes and drain. When they’re cool enough to touch, simply squeeze each one at the root end, and they’ll slip right out. Chop off the remaining roots, and you’re done.

6. Removing an avocado pit - Slice your avocado in half, lengthwise. Take your knife and chop into the exposed pit, then twist and pull. Out comes the pit. Watch your fingers when you remove the pit from the blade of the knife. Now you can scoop out all of the yummy avocado goodness.

7. How to soften butter - Don’t have time for it to sit out and get soft? And you know putting it in the microwave often ends up melting instead of softening. You can never get it quite right. So instead, take a cheese grater to the butter and shred it. It will be softened before you know it.

8. How to peel a hardboiled egg - Don’t you hate sitting there picking at that egg shell? Well, you can peel your hardboiled egg in seconds. Boil the eggs at slow boil for about 12 minutes with about two inches of water above the eggs and a teaspoon of baking soda. Give one end of the egg a tap on the counter and remove the shell pieces from the tip. Repeat with the other end of the egg. Now hold the egg’s width in a cupped hand, raise it to your mouth and blow. The egg falls right out of the shell! If you don’t need the egg to be whole, then simply cut the egg in half with a knife and scoop out the egg with a spoon, no peeling necessary.

9. Peeling a potato - Simply cut the peel lengthwise with a knife, all around the potato. Put in a pot of boiling water and boil until it’s soft inside. Then immediately remove from the water into ice water. Allow to soak in the ice water for 10 seconds and remove. Rub between your hands and the peel falls right off.

10. How to get all of the juice out of citrus fruits - No need to purchase expensive juicing tools. Get all of the juice out with a simple pair of tongs. Cut the fruit in half, place between tongs over a bowl or pitcher with the cut half down, and squeeze. You’ll be amazed at how much juice you have been missing from your fruit.

11. How to peel a kiwi - Slice both ends off the kiwi. Put a tablespoon between the flesh of the fruit and the skin and move the spoon all around the kiwi. This will ease the kiwi right out of its peel.

12. Fishing out egg shells - We’ve all accidently dropped a small fragment of egg shell from time to time. You wouldn’t think it would be so difficult to fish this miniscule piece of shell out of the yolk, but it can be one of the most frustrating moments of cooking when it happens. Unless you know this tip. Simply wet the tip of your finger with water and lightly place your finger over the egg shell, and you’ll be amazed at how quickly that piece of shell will stick right to your finger.

13. Cutting round vegetables - Nothing says frustrating like chasing down that potato to chop it up. Next time you have to cut a round vegetable, cut a thin slice along the length of the vegetable to create a flat side, turn it cut-side down on the cutting board and slice away. When you get to the point where it starts to roll again, flip it onto the flat side from your last cut and continue to slice.

14. Separate egg yolks from egg whites - This might not be a time saver, but it’s a fun way to separate an egg. Crack an egg into a bowl. Gently squeeze an empty plastic water bottle and hold it over the egg yolk. It should suck up just the egg yolk, allowing you to transfer it to another bowl.

15. Prevent a pot from boiling over - They say a watched pot never boils, but if you don’t watch it then you have a mess on your hands. So to keep that pot from boiling over, simply place a wooden spoon over the top of the pot. Any spoon will do really, but a wooden spoon won’t get scalding hot.

What food preparation tips can you add to these?