

BEEF FOR STEWING CONSUMER TIPS

Stewing is a moist heat cooking method, similar to braising, that is perfect for less tender beef cuts. In stewing, the beef is usually covered by liquid.



SMART SHOPPING WHICH CUTS?

Packages of pre-cut beef pieces, labeled **beef for stew**, are usually available in the meat case. They are typically cut from beef chuck or round. Look for pieces that are well trimmed and uniform in size.

Any **beef chuck** or **round** cut, except top round, can be cut into pieces and used in stewing recipes.

Beef shank cross cuts, available both boneless and bone-in, are suitable for stewing. Shank cross cuts are good for hearty soups.

Beef short ribs are cut from the chuck or plate. They are available both boneless and bone-in and are suitable for stewing.

HOW MUCH TO BUY?

- Beef for stew will yield 2-1/2 to 3 three-ounce servings of cooked, trimmed beef per pound.
- Beef shank cross cuts will yield 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 three-ounce servings of cooked, trimmed beef per pound.
- Boneless beef short ribs will yield 2-1/2 to 3 three-ounce servings of cooked, trimmed beef per pound.
- Bone-in short ribs will yield 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 three-ounce servings per pound.



COOKING TIPS

- Use uniform size pieces of beef to ensure they will cook evenly. Cut overly large pieces to match others.
- Use flour, seasoned with salt, pepper and herbs, to lightly coat beef before cooking, if desired. The coating helps seal in flavor and moisture, and helps thicken the sauce.
- Brown beef slowly, over medium heat, to develop rich color and flavor. Use a heavy pan and a small amount of oil.
- Brown beef in batches, without crowding in pan. Overcrowding inhibits browning and promotes steaming and uneven cooking.
- Use enough liquid to cover beef. Good choices include water, broth, wine, beer, fruit or vegetable juice or a combination.
- Bring liquid to a boil, then quickly reduce heat to a level that just maintains a slow simmer.
- Cover pan tightly to retain the steam that will tenderize the beef. Don't lift the cover unnecessarily; it slows the cooking process.
- Simmer gently. Low heat keeps beef moist and promotes tenderness. Boiling will dry and toughen beef.
- Most stews can be cooked on top of the stove or in a preheated 325°F oven. It's more convenient to cook soups, with their greater amount of liquid and more frequent stirring, on top of the stove.
- Many beef for stewing dishes are ideal for preparing in the slow cooker. Check manufacturer's directions.



DETERMINING DONENESS

- Simmer until beef is fork-tender. To test, insert a utility fork into beef. When the fork can be inserted without resistance, the beef is done.
- Don't overcook. Cooking beyond the fork-tender stage can result in dry, stringy beef.