

Cooking a Steak

The first step in cooking a steak is picking the right steak. Part of it comes down to personal preference, and part of it comes down to having the right eye for it. The cut you choose is mostly preference. My favorite cut is the New York Strip. The Ribeye is good – though a little too fatty for my taste. The Tenderloin is extremely tender, and is my wife's favorite, but I think it completely lacks any flavor, and isn't worth the money. (I make it and buy it for her, though.)



When I'm buying a steak, I look for decent marbling. The flavor is in the fat. I also try to get a steak that's at least an inch thick. Usually you're not going to find these in the styrofoam containers in the refrigerated case. You'll need to talk to the butcher.

So here's what I do when I'm gonna prepare steak for dinner. An hour before I'm ready to start cooking, I take the steak out of the refrigerator and let it sit out on the counter, to get closer to room temperature. 30 minutes before dinner, I turn the oven on and get it preheated to 300°. 10 minutes later, I put the cast iron pan onto the stovetop and turn the burner on beneath it to high. I'll also probably turn on the exhaust fan then, too. Then I take some paper towel and dry off the steak as much as I can ... moisture inhibits browning. I'll usually just sprinkle the steak on both sides with a

little kosher salt, but I sometimes use a salt/spice mix like McCormick's [Asian or Mediterranean Sea Salt](#) mixes. (Avoid mixes with things that go bitter when they're cooked at high heat ... this includes garlic flakes or paprika.) I'll also dab the steak with a couple drops of canola oil and rub the salt into the flesh.

Depending on the thickness of the steak, I'll cook it in the hot cast iron pan for 3 – 4 minutes on each side. There's usually quite a bit of smoke involved here. After I've seared both sides, I put the steak into the oven, and set the timer for 8 minutes. After that, I check the steak with my tongs. If the steak is still too rare, it'll feel like the fleshy part between your thumb and forefinger when your hand is relaxed. It'll be medium when it feels like the same spot with your thumb flexed. You'll want to undercook it a little, because the heat will carry over a little while it rests, which you should always do – 10 minutes, minimum, on the plate before serving.