

Egg Salad the Way You Like It

Our Young Chefs, 2015

Makes 6 servings

Eggs are a perfectly beautiful food because you can cook them so many ways; as a result, they magically and dramatically change shape and texture. In egg salad, the firm diced whites contrast with the creamy yolk. The salad is bound together with just a little mayonnaise or Greek yogurt. Some people prefer a "pure" egg salad, seasoned simply with salt and pepper. Others like to surprise their taste buds with optional herbs and flavorful add-ins.

INGREDIENTS

12 large eggs

DIRECTIONS

Prepare/boil the eggs: It is best for the **eggs** to be at room temperature before cooking. This can be accomplished by immersing them in a bowl of body-temperature water to take the chill off for 15 minutes prior to cooking. Change the **water** once during that time.

Place the **eggs** in a 3-quart pan and cover with enough **cold water** from the faucet to cover eggs by **1 inch of water** over the top of the eggs. Place the pan over high heat; bring **water** just to a rapid boil. As soon as the water reaches a rapid boil, remove pan from the heat and cover the pan tightly with a lid. Set a timer for 10 to 11 minutes.

After 10 to 11 minutes, remove the lid; drain off the **water** from the **eggs**. (Watch the time carefully when cooking the eggs. Overcooking at this stage causes a green layer to form around the yolk. This layer is caused by a reaction between the iron in the yolk and the sulfur in the white. Heat speeds up this reaction, so the longer the egg cooks, the greater the chance of discoloration. This green layer is not harmful in any way, just unsightly.)

Chill the eggs: After draining off the **hot water**, immediately pour cold running water into the pan. Pour that out and pour in more **cold running water** into the pan. This is to quickly take down the temperature of the pan and the eggs. Allow the eggs to sit in the **cool water** for about 5 minutes.

Peel the eggs: Pour off all but a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch or less layer of **water** in the bottom of the pan. Shake the pan from side-to-side in all directions so the eggs crash into each other and the water sloshes around the **eggs** in the pan. This will crack the **egg shells** and moisten/lubricate the shells. Begin peeling at the larger end, (the flat side) where the air pocket is, and remove the **shell** under running water to make the shelling easier. Take care to remove the membrane under the shell that sometimes clings to the egg. Give the egg one last rinse to remove any fine **egg shell**. Set all of the eggs on a cloth or paper towel briefly to dry.

Prepare the egg salad: An easy way to dice the hard-cooked **eggs** is to use a wire egg slicer. Slice the **egg** in one direction. Carefully pick up the **egg slices** keeping them together; rotate the slices 90°. Place in the egg slicer again; slice (this now slices



"Dicing" hard-cooked eggs using a wire egg slicer.



Whimsical egg slicer

across the first egg slices to dice the **egg white** and **yolks**). Place the **diced egg** on a cutting board; use a knife to cut any long/over-sized egg-white pieces smaller. As the eggs are diced, combine them in a medium-size mixing bowl.

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup mayonnaise or Greek yogurt
Salt **OR** seasoned salt
Freshly ground pepper

Prepare the egg-salad base: To the **diced, hard-cooked eggs**, add the **mayonnaise** or **Greek yogurt**; add more, if a creamier texture is desired. Season with **salt** (or **seasoned salt**) and **pepper** to taste.

EGG SALAD MIX-IN OPTIONS

Celery
Bell pepper (red or green)
Scallions
Olives
Pickles, sweet or dill
Anchovies
Bacon or turkey bacon, cooked
Fresh herbs such as basil, dill, parsley, cilantro or chives
Herb and spice blends
Yellow or Dijon mustard
Prepared horseradish

Mix and match add-ins: Finely dice one or more **items** from the list of suggested flavorful **mix-ins**; the amount added is according to your taste. Add the prepared selected **mix-ins** to the **seasoned diced egg** and **mayonnaise** or **yogurt** ingredients. Using a flexible spatula, gently stir to blend. Taste; add more of **any ingredients** desired.

Serving suggestions: Serve your custom **egg salad** on a **sandwich**, on **crackers**, **Multigrain "Scoops"** or on a bed of **salad greens** tossed with vinaigrette. Leftovers keep for up to 1 week, covered in the refrigerator.
