

The Intuitive Cook
Kitchen Confidence beyond Rules and Recipes



THE FLAVOUR
CHEAT SHEET

TWEAK & RESCUE TIPS

RESCUE TIPS



TOO FATTY/FLABBY/RICH

add brightness (acid)

TOO BLAND

check seasoning (aim for 'salted' not 'salty')
add brightness (acid)
add layers and/or bold flavours (umami)
serve with a sauce

TOO SALTY

balance with acid
balance with sweetness
add bulk/dilute

TOO ACIDIC/SOUR

balance with fat
balance with salt
add some sweetness

FOOD BURNING

do not get distracted/use a timer
lower the heat
add a splash of water or oil
keep stirring

TOO SPICY

add fat (e.g. cream, butter, olive oil)
add starch (e.g. noodles, beans, flour)

TOO BITTER

balance with salt
balance with acid

TOO DRY

if protein: it's overcooked
rescue with butter, oil or a sauce
add liquid (one spoon at a time)
pay attention to the texture (e.g. stiff or collapsing)

TOO WET

cook longer with open pot to evaporate
add some starch to thicken (e.g. flour, mashed potato, cornflour)
add 'sponge' ingredients (e.g. ground linseed, bread crumbs, oats)

FLAVOUR TWEAKS



*Cooking is all about
using your senses...
mostly common sense.*

Samin Nosrat

DEPTH

don't leave out the base layer
extra browning
add umami (savouriness)
add sweetness

UMAMI/SAVOURY

soy sauce, miso paste, fish sauce
olives, olive paste, capers, tomato paste
yeast extract, yeast flakes
aged cheese, anchovies
cumin, nigella seeds, fenugreek, oregano

BRIGHT

citrus juice, citrus zest
vinegar, pickles, capers
ferments, tomato, fruit juice, wine
yoghurt, sour cream
coriander, sumac

SWEET

honey, molasses, maple syrup, cane sugar
fruit juice, fruit
cinnamon, allspice, cloves

SMOKY

turmeric powder, smoked paprika, black
cardamom, smoked salt
chipotle chilli, smoked bacon, chorizo,
smoked fish, liquid smoke

CREAMY

cream, butter, yoghurt, creamy cheese
tahini, nut butter, almond flour
egg
melted cheese

HOT/SPICY

low level heat adds depth

harissa, chilli sauce, chilli flakes/powder
black pepper, ginger
hot pickles

REMEMBER

you can always add more
but you can't take it out

add a little at a time
keep tasting