

MEAT MATTERS

CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO THE MEAT CASE



CONSUMER'S GUIDE

What to have for dinner? Which cut of meat would be best? More than 150 different cuts of beef, pork and lamb are sold in grocery store meat cases. But these bountiful selections can translate into confusion for some consumers. Regional and local differences in the names used for cuts can further complicate meat purchase decisions.

According to the American Meat Institute in Washington, DC, carrying a simple chart in your pocket can help consumers make good selections at the meat case and ensure an enjoyable eating experience.

Different cooking methods should be used depending on a meat cut's natural tenderness and its lean/fat content. The three major types of cooking are dry heat, moist heat and combination cooking.

Dry Heat Cooking is best for naturally tender cuts of meat. This technique uses hot air or fat to transfer heat to the food. Dry heat cookery results in meats with a rich flavor caused by browning and allowing surface sugars to caramelize. Dry heat cooking does not have a tenderizing effect, so meats cooked by dry heat techniques should be naturally tender or marinated for an appropriate period of time in a tenderizing marinade.

Dry heat methods include:

- Roasting
- Grilling
- Broiling
- Pan-Broiling
- Sautéing
- Stir Frying

Moist Heat Cooking is ideal for inherently less tender cuts of meat. Steam, water or other liquids are used to transfer heat to the food. Moist heat methods are used to develop tenderness and to emphasize natural food flavors.

TO THE MEAT CASE

To achieve tenderness, meats are gently cooked at low temperatures from one to several hours.

Moist heat cooking procedures include simmering and slow cooking.

Combination Cooking uses both dry heat and moist heat procedures. Meats are first seared or browned in hot fat, then covered and slowly cooked in liquids over low heat. Less tender and typically less expensive meats benefit from combination cooking methods as the moisture slowly penetrates the meat and softens the connective tissues. The dishes usually have hearty flavors.

Combination cooking techniques include braising and stewing.

Marinades are often used in combination with dry heat cooking. Marinades, which contain an acidic ingredient (such as wine, vinegar, citrus juice) or a natural tenderizing enzyme (found in papaya, ginger, pineapple, kiwi, figs) help break down the muscles and tissues of inherently less tender meat cuts. After marinating, the meat may be cooked by a dry heat method.

The charts included in the brochure offer a ready reference for beef, pork and lamb cuts. For recipes that feature “value cuts” – meat cuts that provide a big protein return on a budget, download the companion brochure “Stretch Your Meat Dollar” at www.meatmattersinfo.org.

For nutrition information, visit www.meatpoultrynutrition.org

For meat safety information, visit www.meatsafety.org

KNOW YOUR BEEF CUTS

LOCATION		RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS						
Approved Terms for Beef Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	Roast	Grill or Broil	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Panbroil or Saute	Stir Fry	Braise	Slow Cooker*
Chuck 7-Bone Pot Roast							✓	✓
Chuck Roast, Boneless	Chuck Pot Roast						✓	✓
*Shoulder Pot Roast, Boneless							✓	✓
Arm Pot Roast							✓	✓
Cross Rib Pot Roast	Cross Rib Roast, Shoulder Clod						✓	✓
Chuck Eye Roast		✓					✓	✓
Chuck Steak, Boneless				✓				✓
Chuck Eye Steak, Boneless			✓		✓			
*Shoulder Steak, Boneless				✓			✓	✓
*Shoulder Center	Ranch Steak		✓					
*Shoulder Petite Tender		✓	✓					
*Shoulder Petite Tender Medallions					✓			
Shoulder Top Blade Steak	Top Blade Steak, Blade Steak, Top Chuck Steak		✓		✓		✓	
Flat Iron Steak			✓		✓			✓
Rib Roast, Large End		✓						
Rib Roast, Small End	Loin End	✓						
Rib Roast, Whole, Standing	Prime Rib	✓						

CHUCK SECTION

SECTION

RB	Rib Steak	Market Steak, Spencer Steak	✓	✓
	Rib Eye Roast, Bone-in		✓	
	Rib Eye Roast, Boneless		✓	
	Rib Eye Steak, Boneless	Delmonico Steak, Spencer Steak, Market Steak	✓	✓
	Back Ribs		✓	✓
	Porterhouse Steak		✓	
	*T-Bone Steak		✓	
	*Top Loin Steak, Boneless	Strip Steak, Kansas City Strip Steak, New York Strip Steak	✓	✓
	*Top Loin Steak	Boneless Club Steak, Ambassador Steak, Shell Steak	✓	✓
	Top Loin Roast	Shell Roast, NY Strip Roast	✓	
SHORT LOIN SECTION				
SIRLOIN SECTION	*Tenderloin Roast	Filet Mignon Roast	✓	
	*Tenderloin Steak	Filet Mignon, Fillet Steak, Chateaubriand	✓	✓
	Sirloin Steak	Double Bone/Flat Bone Steak, Round Bone Steak, Pin or Hip Bone Steak, Wedge Bone Steak	✓	✓
	*Top Sirloin Steak, Boneless	Sirloin Butt Steak, London Broil	✓	✓
			✓	✓
			✓	✓
			✓	✓
			✓	✓
			✓	✓
			✓	✓
		✓	✓	

KNOW YOUR BEEF CUTS (cont.)

LOCATION		RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS						
Approved Terms for Beef Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	Roast	Grill or Broil	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Panbroil or Saute	Stir Fry	Braise	Slow Cooker*
*Tri Tip Roast	Triangle-Tip Roast	✓					✓	✓
*Tri Tip Steak	Culotte, Triangle Steak		✓		✓	✓		
*Top Round Steak	London Broil			✓	✓	✓	✓	
*Top Round Roast		✓						
*Bottom Round Steak	Western Griller		✓			✓	✓	✓
*Bottom Round Roast		✓					✓	✓
*Eye of Round Steak	Eye Steak		✓			✓	✓	
*Eye of Round Roast		✓					✓	
Round Rump Roast	Rump Roast	✓					✓	✓
*Round Steak				✓			✓	✓
Round Steak, Tenderized	Cube Steak				✓			✓
*Round Tip Steak					✓			
*Round Tip Roast		✓						
*Sirloin Tip Center Roast		✓						
*Sirloin Tip Center Steak			✓		✓			
*Sirloin Tip Side Steak				✓				
*Shank Cross-Cut							✓	✓
*Brisket Flat Cut	Brisket, Boneless						✓	✓

ROUND SECTION

FOR SHANK & BRISKET

*Flank Steak	Jiffy Steak, Flank Steak Filet, London Broil	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flank Steak Rolls		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skirt Steak	Fajita Meat, Philadelphia Steak	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ground Beef (* 95% lean ground beef)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Beef Sausage (from ground beef)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boneless Stew Beef	May be cut from chuck, brisket, rib, or plate sections					✓	✓
Cubes for Kabobs	May be cut from round section			✓		✓	
Short Ribs	May be cut from chuck, rib or plate sections					✓	✓

* NOTE: LEAN BEEF CUTS

These cuts meet government guidelines for “lean” and are based on cooked servings with visible fat trimmed. Lean is defined as less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams saturated fat, less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per serving and per 100 grams (3.5 ounces).

References:

* Refer to manufacturer’s directions
The Beef Checkoff
Uniform Retail Meat Identity Standards (Used URMIS approved terms)
Webster’s New World Dictionary of Culinary Arts

KNOW YOUR CUTS OF PORK

LOCATION		RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS							
Approved Terms for Pork Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	Roast	Grill	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Panbroil & Saute	Broil	Stir Fry	Braise	Slow Cooker+
Shoulder Butt	Boston Butt Roast, Blade Boston Roast, Boston Shoulder	✓						✓	✓
Bone-in Blade Roast		✓						✓	✓
Boneless Blade Roast (BRT)		✓						✓	✓
Blade Steak	Pork Steaks 7-Rib Cut		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Picnic Shoulder Arm Roast		✓						✓	
Arm Picnic Roast	Picnic Shoulder Arm Roast	✓						✓	
Smoked Picnic		✓						✓	
Shoulder	Blade End								
Country-Style Ribs	Country Spare Rib	✓	✓			✓		✓	
Fresh Shanks								✓	✓
Smoked Hocks								✓	✓
Center Rib Roast	Rack of Pork, Center Cut Pork Loin			✓					
Frenched Rib Roast		✓							
Crown Rib Roast	Loin Crown Roast	✓							

SHOULDER SECTION

SECTION

KNOW YOUR CUTS OF PORK (cont.)

LOCATION	Approved Terms for Pork Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS									
			Roast	Grill	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Panbroil & Saute	Broil	Stir Fry	Braise	Slow Cooker*		
LEG/HAM SECTION	Smoked Ham		✓									
	Smoked Ham, Shank Portion		✓									
	Smoked Ham, Rump Portion	Smoked Ham Butt Half	✓									
	Boneless Smoked Ham		✓									
	Canned Ham		✓									
	Fresh Boneless Ham Roast		✓									
	Fresh Leg Pork	Fresh Ham										
	Smoked Ham Center Slice	Pork Leg Steak, Center Slice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Leg Cutlet			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ham Hock											
COMBINATION	Ground Pork	From lean pork and trimmings from shoulder	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sausage Links	From lean pork and trimmings, typically from shoulder and loin or from any fresh cut	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Pork Pieces	Typically cut										

	from the loin				
Cubes for Kabobs	From any fresh pork cut	✓	✓	✓	✓
Slices & Strips	From any fresh pork cut		✓		✓
Pig's Feet					✓

References:

- * National Pork Board
 - * Uniform Retail Meat Identity Standards
 - + Refer to manufacturer's directions
- Webster's New World Dictionary of Culinary Arts*

KNOW YOUR CUTS OF LAMB

LOCATION		RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS						
Approved Terms for Lamb Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	Roast	Grill	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Broil	Panbroil or Saute	Braise	Slow Cooker*
SHOULDER SECTION	Boneless & Rolled Shoulder Roast (BRT)	✓					✓	
	Pre-Sliced Shoulder	✓					✓	
	Saratoga Roast	✓					✓	
	Square Cut Shoulder	✓					✓	
	Arm Chops		✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Blade Chops		✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Rack of Lamb	✓						
	Rib Roast	✓				✓		
	Crown Rib Roast	✓						
	Rib Chops		✓	✓		✓	✓	
RACK or RIB SECTION	Frenched Rib Chops	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	Loin Roast	✓						
	Tenderloin	✓						
	Loin Chops		✓	✓		✓		
	Double Loin Chops		✓	✓		✓		
	Boneless Loin Strip (BRT)	✓						
	Medallions	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Noisettes	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Whole Leg of Lamb, with Shank	✓						

KNOW YOUR CUTS OF LAMB (cont.)

LOCATION Approved Terms for Lamb Cuts*	Marketplace Fanciful and Regional Names	RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS						
		Roast	Grill	Marinate & Grill or Broil	Broil	Panbroil or Saute	Braise	Slow Cooker+
Lamb Sausage	From ground lamb	✓	✓		✓			✓
Lamb for Stew	May be cut from leg or shoulder sections	Baked in casseroles					✓	✓
Cubes for Kabobs	May be cut from leg or shoulder sections						✓	

References:

- * American Lamb Board
 - * Uniform Retail Meat Identity Standards
 - + Refer to manufacturer's directions
- Webster's New World Dictionary of Culinary Arts*



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