

THE BARBECUE - BBQ

“A great Australian tradition”

To get great results when cooking on a barbecue you need to make sure that you are organised, as once you start it all happens quite quickly! So make sure you have the following equipment ready:

- A good gas or charcoal barbecue for cooking the steak.
- Long-handled tongs for turning your steak.
- A bowl with oil in it and a pastry brush, or spray on oil.
- A large plate and foil for resting the cooked steak before serving.
- Barbecue cleaning tools (stiff wire brush or barbecue scraper), so you can clean your barbecue when it's still warm, so it's ready for next time!

10 Steps to wonderful barbecue steak

If you follow these simple steps for cooking steak on the barbecue you'll impress your guests with tender, juicy meat that's full of flavour and cooked to perfection.

Step 1: Bring steak to room temperature before cooking. The meat can become tough if it goes straight from the fridge onto the barbecue.

Step 2: Drain any marinade from the steak before placing it on the barbecue to cook. Excess liquid can ignite on the barbecue and cause a flare-up. Also if you're cooking steak on a flat plate, the liquid can boil around the meat causing it to stew and making it tough.

Step 3: Preheat the barbecue grill or flat plate on medium-high to obtain the correct temperature before adding the steak. You should hear a sizzle as the steak meets the hot surface. The heat seals the surface, trapping the juices inside.

Step 4: Oil the meat not the barbecue. The key to good steak is to brush your steak with oil before placing it on the barbecue, do not oil the barbecue! If you are not using a marinade, oil the meat. Brush both sides of the steak with olive oil this will prevent the meat from sticking to the barbecue and also prevents the oil from burning. Excess oil can create smoke and cause flare-ups on the barbecue.

Step 5: Season the meat. If you wish to season the steak do it just before cooking, as salt draws out the flavoursome juices from the meat and makes it tough. Season one side with salt and pepper, then cook the steak, seasoned-side down first, to seal in the flavour. Season the other side just before turning the meat over.

Step 6: Use long-handled tongs to turn the steak. Sharp forks can pierce the meat surface, which allows the juices to escape. Long tongs

will also help keep your hands a safe distance from the hotplate or exposed flames.

Step 7: Cook the steak until cooked to your liking. Cooking times vary depending on the thickness (see below).

Step 8: Turn steak once only during cooking – repeated turning of the meat lets the juices escape, which can make the meat tough.

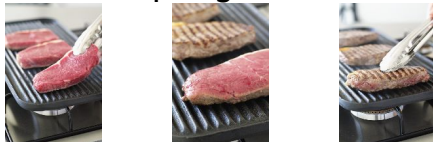
Step 9: Limit the number of steaks cooking on the barbecue at any one time. Overcrowding reduces the heat, which can prevent the steaks from cooking evenly and cause them to release juices, making the meat tough.

Step 10: Rest the meat for 5 minutes after cooking. Transfer it to a plate and cover it loosely with foil. If you cover it tightly, the meat will sweat and lose its moisture. The heat during cooking pushes the meat juices to the centre of the steak, so resting it after cooking allows the meat to relax and the juices to distribute evenly throughout the steak.

How to know when your steak is done

The time needed to cook a steak depends on the thickness of the piece of meat and how you like it cooked.

Don't be tempted to cut into a steak to see if it's done. This allows the meat juices to escape, making the meat tough. Instead, press the centre of the steak with the back of your tongs – if it's medium the meat will spring back.



A guide for cooking times:

For steak 1.5cm thick –

Rare – 1 – 1 1/2 minutes each side

Medium – 2 – 3 minutes each side

Well done – 3 – 4 minutes each side

For steak 2–3cm thick –

Rare – 2 – 3 minutes each side

Medium – 4 – 5 minutes each side

Well done – 5 – 6 minutes each side

Tongs test:

Press the centre of the steak with the back of your tongs.

Rare – soft to touch with tongs

Medium – slightly firmer and springy

Well done – very firm with no spring.