

Recipe Storage

How Do You Organize Your Recipes?

Recipe storage solutions from chefs, cookbook authors, and readers

"I go scrapbook-style" Create a "family favorites" recipe book. It's a fun, functional keepsake to pass down in your family. Divide a large decorative book into sections for appetizers, main dishes, etc. Cut and paste your recipes into the sections. Use scrapbooking supplies to embellish the pages and write notes to personalize the book. For easy reference, color-code sections, number the pages, and make a table of contents. --**Jodie Watson, organization expert and founder and president of *Supreme Organization***

"I think seasonally" I cook differently depending on the time of year, so I sort my recipes according to the seasons. My batch of summer recipes contains grilled foods and dishes that use all the produce that's available locally (corn on the cob, for example). My winter recipes include soups, stews, and heartier fare that makes use of pantry staples. Organizing this way will help you shop seasonally, which is healthier and more economical too! --**Leanne Ely, author of *Saving Dinner***

"I fill a binder" To keep my [recipes](#) clean and easy to find, I use a binder with clear plastic insert sheets. They allow you to store two recipes per page, front and back. That way, I can take a few out while I'm cooking, and if something spills on them, I just wipe it off. --**Dianne Martinez, *Prevention* reader, via e-mail**

"I sort by time" I group my quick-and- easy meals together, so if the kids have sports and we need a fast meal, I immediately know what recipes to look at. Recipes for dishes that take longer to prepare are kept together for when I have more time on weekends. --**Annette Olday, *Prevention* reader, Hamburg, NY**

"I cherish my photo book" My boyfriend used Blurb.com to create a book of photos from our trip to Europe. He paired them with recipes he found for the delicious dishes we had eaten in Belgium, France, and Spain. Photos are a great visual record, but memories of food and meals together really take me around the world again! --**Jessica Sokol, *Prevention's* associate art director**

"I use recipe boxes" I store my recipes on large index cards in red plastic boxes with snapping front flaps. I keep a separate box for each dish type, such as breakfasts and [desserts](#). Because the recipes are all the same size, they stay neat and organized. And they're easy to flip through to find ideas when I'm planning my [menus](#). --**Lauren Braun Costello, coauthor of *Notes on Cooking***

"I save them to my laptop" Every recipe I've ever developed is saved in a folder on my MacBook, with the recipe title as the file name. Recipes collected from friends and other chefs are scanned and stored the same way. That way, they're all easily and immediately searchable by the recipe title, they're with me everywhere I go, and they don't really need to be organized--which is great, because I hate organizing things. --**Ted Allen, host of *Chopped* on Food Network**

"I group by cuisine" We are an international family, so I categorize my recipes by ethnic cuisines. For example, there's a recipe for beef bulgogi in my folder of Korean dishes. I also have folders of Thai, Indian, French, and Mexican foods. From there, I separate them into typical dish types. --**Naam Pruitt, cooking instructor and author of *Lemongrass & Limes***

"I use a file cabinet" I organize my recipes, kept in their original form, by type (salads, soups, pies...) in a file cabinet. I love to hold the paper and remember where it came from. Some recipes are handwritten by relatives and friends; others bear the telltale indentations of typewriters; and, of course, there are plenty of computer printouts as well. I keep my favorites at the front of each folder for quick access. --**Cindy Mushet, pastry chef and author of *The Art and Soul of Baking***

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