

How to Make a Roux

THE SAUCE AND GRAVY



CHANNEL



<https://youtu.be/kDzKaahpcv4>

A roux is one of the most important foundational techniques in cooking and sauce making. Made from equal parts fat and flour, a roux is used to thicken sauces, soups, gravies, mac and cheese, gumbo, and many classic French mother sauces like béchamel and velouté.

Learning how to properly cook a roux will help you create smooth, lump-free sauces with the exact consistency you want — from light and silky to rich and hearty.

This guide walks through both a classic white roux and a flavorful blonde roux while also explaining how to adjust roux ratios for different sauce thicknesses.

Roux Ratios

Thin Sauces

1 tbsp (14 g) fat

1 tbsp (8 g) flour

Per 1 cup (250 ml) cooking liquid

Medium Thickness Sauces

1.5 tbsp (21 g) fat

1.5 tbsp (12 g) flour

Per 1 cup (250 ml) cooking liquid

Thick Sauces

3–4 tbsp (42–56 g) fat

3–4 tbsp (24–32 g) flour

Per 1 cup (250 ml) cooking liquid

White Roux

Ingredients

3 tbsp (42 g) unsalted butter

3 tbsp (24 g) all-purpose flour

2 cups (500 ml) cool chicken stock

Prep Work

Measure all ingredients before beginning since the roux cooks quickly once started.

Keep the cooking liquid cool before adding it to the hot roux (or vice versa, hot liquid to cool roux) to help prevent lumps.

Have a whisk and spoon nearby for stirring and scraping the pan thoroughly.

Use a saucepan or sauté pan large enough to comfortably whisk the sauce as it thickens.

To Make the Roux

Place a saucepan over medium heat and add the butter. Melt the butter completely while keeping the heat controlled so the butter stays pale in color. A white roux should not brown.

Once the butter is melted, add the flour and whisk continuously until fully incorporated. The roux should resemble wet sand with no dry flour pockets remaining.

Cook the roux for several minutes while stirring frequently. As it cooks, the color will shift slightly from buttery yellow to a pale off-white color.

The roux is ready when it develops a warm, slightly nutty aroma and no longer smells like raw flour.

Slowly pour the cool stock into the hot roux while whisking constantly. This temperature contrast helps create a smooth, lump-free sauce.

Increase the heat to medium to medium-high and bring the sauce to a gentle simmer. As it simmers, the roux will activate and begin thickening the liquid.

Whisk thoroughly and scrape the sides and bottom of the pan to fully incorporate the roux into the sauce.

Continue simmering until the sauce reaches a smooth, glossy consistency that coats the back of a spoon.

To Serve

Use a white roux as the base for gravies, cream sauces, béchamel, velouté, mac and cheese, soups, or casseroles.

Serve immediately or continue building the sauce with additional ingredients.

Blonde Roux

Ingredients

1 tbsp (14 g) unsalted butter

1 tbsp (14 g) bacon grease

2 tbsp (16 g) all-purpose flour

1.5 cups (375 ml) veal stock

Prep Work

Measure all ingredients before beginning.

Have the veal stock ready nearby before the roux finishes cooking.

To Make the Roux

Place a saucepan over medium heat and add the butter and bacon grease (or any fat you would like to use).

Once fully melted, add the flour and whisk until smooth and evenly combined.

Cook the roux slowly for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Over time, the roux will gradually darken from pale white to a light golden-brown color similar to peanut butter or a brown paper bag.

As the roux cooks, it develops a deeper, nuttier flavor than a white roux.

Once the blonde roux reaches the desired color and aroma, slowly pour in the stock while whisking continuously.

Bring the sauce to a gentle simmer over medium-high heat while scraping the bottom and sides of the pan.

Continue simmering for several minutes until the sauce thickens and coats the back of a spoon.

To Serve

A blonde roux works especially well in Cajun gravies, velouté sauces, soups, and richer savory sauces where a slightly nutty flavor is desired.

Understanding Roux Types

White roux is cooked only a few minutes and provides thickening power with very little additional flavor.

Blonde roux is cooked longer, usually between 2–10 minutes, developing a mild nutty flavor and slightly darker color.

Brown roux is cooked anywhere from 10–50 minutes and develops a deep, rich, roasted flavor commonly used in gumbo and darker gravies.

The longer a roux cooks, the darker and more flavorful it becomes, though it also loses some thickening ability over time

Tips & Substitutions

Butter is the most common fat for roux, but bacon grease, duck fat, vegetable oil, beef tallow, or other cooking fats can also be used.

The roux should always resemble wet sand. If it becomes dry or clumpy, add a little more fat to smooth it out.

To help prevent lumps, always combine a hot roux with a cool liquid or a cool roux with a hot liquid. Avoid combining hot liquid with a hot roux.

Whisking continuously while adding liquid helps create a smooth, silky sauce.

A white roux provides the most thickening power because it is cooked the shortest amount of time.

Blonde and brown roux develop deeper flavor as they cook but gradually lose some thickening strength.

If lumps do form, vigorous whisking can often smooth the sauce back out.

Roux-based sauces will continue to thicken slightly as they simmer and cool.