

# Browning Mince

## Introduction

I guess the first question is “why bother?” There are a few reasons:

- It does bring out the flavours better
- It gives it a better colour
- It separates the mince into the small bits of mince rather than leave it in clumps, much like meatballs!

Many recipes I’ve seen suggest that we brown mince and cook it quickly by frying. Marion’s Meals relies on cooking the mince by boiling after browning.

When you boil mince, you will add more flavours and ingredients so whether you fry or boil the mince is less relevant but you will get a different texture.

I use low fat mince.

## Browning Mince by Frying

Add a very small amount of oil or butter to a frying pan over a medium heat - but not until it is smoking hot.

Add a small amount of mince – don’t cover the bottom of the pan completely.

Avoid over-stirring the mince as it fries. Allow the mince to develop a decent brown colour before breaking it up and turning.

Tip the cooked mince into a bowl or pan once browned. Keep going in small batches until all the mince is browned.

You are advised to clean the oil and burnt bits from the frying pan between batches as they can easily burn on the next batch – giving a bad taste.

You could keep the used oil and meat bits for your main cook or for making a sauce.

You then add the cooked mince to your cottage pie, bridies, bolognaise or another mince-based dish.

The biggest batch I’ve cooked this way was about 10lb (5kg) and it took ages!

## Browning Mince for Boiling

We are not trying to cook the mince. We just want to separate and brown it.

Put a splash of oil or butter in the pan and melt on a low to medium heat.

Add the mince in batches of around 250g (about ½ pound – a handful). When I’ve been in a rush, I’ve done it with as much as 1kg at a time, but it’s harder to work. My advice? Work in batches!

Don’t be afraid to get in there with your spatula to break up the mince and turn it over. Once it starts to brown, it should all brown quickly.

Check to make sure there are no lumps of mince. The lumps will have red and cold spots in the middle so break them up with your spatula.

## Larger Quantities

As each batch starts to brown, you can add more mince to the pot for browning.

This is not recommended as the first batch will be in the pot much longer than the last batch.

You should brown the mince in batches in a smaller pot and transfer each batch of browned mince to a larger pot for cooking.

Repeat until you have all your mince browned.



Once all the mince is browned, cover with water, bring to the boil and simmer for cooking. Check the individual recipes to see what vegetables or other ingredients you need to add.