

BAKING TEMPS AT A GLANCE

325° - 350°F: The range you use most often. Temperatures over 300°F are where you begin to experience caramelization (browning of sugars) and the Maillard reaction (browning of proteins). Use this range for anything that is going to be cooking for a while, such as slow roasts or braises. Cakes are also typically baked at 350°F since they have a fair amount of sugar. If baked at a higher temp, the exterior of the cake would burn before it was fully cooked in the center.

375° - 400°F: Shorter term baking or roasting favors a slightly higher temperature to ensure crisp edges to cookies or bubbling golden cheese. This is also the perfect roasting temperature for chicken to ensure golden, crispy skin. As the heat gets higher, so does the risk of burning, so you must keep an eye on whatever is in the oven.

425° - 450°F: If you want perfect golden roasted vegetables, this is the temperature for you. This is where you will want to do any short-term baking or roasting, because you get a quick burst of high heat to ensure a golden color without having to stay in the oven for too long. For example, this is the ideal temperature if you are working with puff pastry, since you want the oven to be over 400°F to ensure the steam releases and puffs up the pastry.

475° - 500°F: If you are cranking the heat to the highest your oven can go, you're likely making pizza or breads. A super high temperature will cause the bread or pizza dough to rise and cook before the gluten has a chance to set.