

LETTUCE

Lettuce can be classified into six broad categories: Leaf/loose-leaf, Cos/Romaine, Crisphead (iceberg), Butterhead, Stem/asparagus and Oilseed (not for consumption); the most common being iceberg, romaine, and leaf. Regardless of the variety, lettuce is full of antioxidants, dietary fiber, water, and other essential nutrients while low in calories.



Cut off the stem and separate the individual leaves. The leaves can also just be torn from the lettuce head.



Trim the stalk to the bottom of the lettuce head. Lay the lettuce on its side and cut in half. Place the halves cut side down and half each again. (Used for salads or grilling.)



Cut the lettuce head in half and then remove the stalk. Now, make slices from top to bottom the desired width. Then make cross cuts the same width. Tearing the leaves into bite sizes can also be done. (Used for salads.)



For loose leaf lettuce, take the washed leaves and stack; then, roll up the leaves. With a chef's knife, slice thin strips from the end of the lettuce roll. With lettuce heads that are firmer, cut the head into halves or quarters (depending on the size). Lay the wedge cut side down and then make your slices. (Used for sandwich topping, salads, or cooking.)



CLOCKWISE from top right: Shredded, Chopped, Wedged, Whole Leaf

Ways to Prep Lettuce:

Wash: Remove the leaves from the stem, leave whole or cut to the desired size. Wash under fresh, cold water; cold water helps crisp the lettuce leaves. Remove from water and dry. A lettuce spinner works well to remove excess water.

Remember to **avoid bare hand contact** with any ready to eat food.

Use the right knife for the job: **A Chef's Knife.**

Ways to Serve Lettuce:

RAW: This is the most common way of eating lettuces. Chopped or torn into pieces for a salad, whole leaf or shredded for a sandwich, or used as a wrap or serving vessel for an hors d'oeuvre.

BAKED: An example of this method would be torn or chopped arugula added to the top of a pizza.

SAUTÉ/STIR FRY: Use dry, chopped, torn or shredded lettuce. In a hot sauté pan, add olive oil. Then, add your seasonings and other ingredients and start to cook. Add in the lettuce last because it does not take long to cook through; usually no more than 2 minutes. The lettuce will be a little limp but should remain somewhat crisp.

GRILLED: This works best with lettuce that has leaves that are meatier, crisper, and thicker to hold up to the high heat (ex. romaine and radicchio). Cut the lettuce head into quarters, lay on a plate and drizzle with olive oil and desired seasonings. Heat your grill or grill pan; then, add on your lettuce wedges. Turn often to prevent heavy charring. When the lettuce is somewhat soft, browned, and a little charred, remove from the heat. Place on a serving plate. This can be topped with assorted toppings, cheese and/or dressing.

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