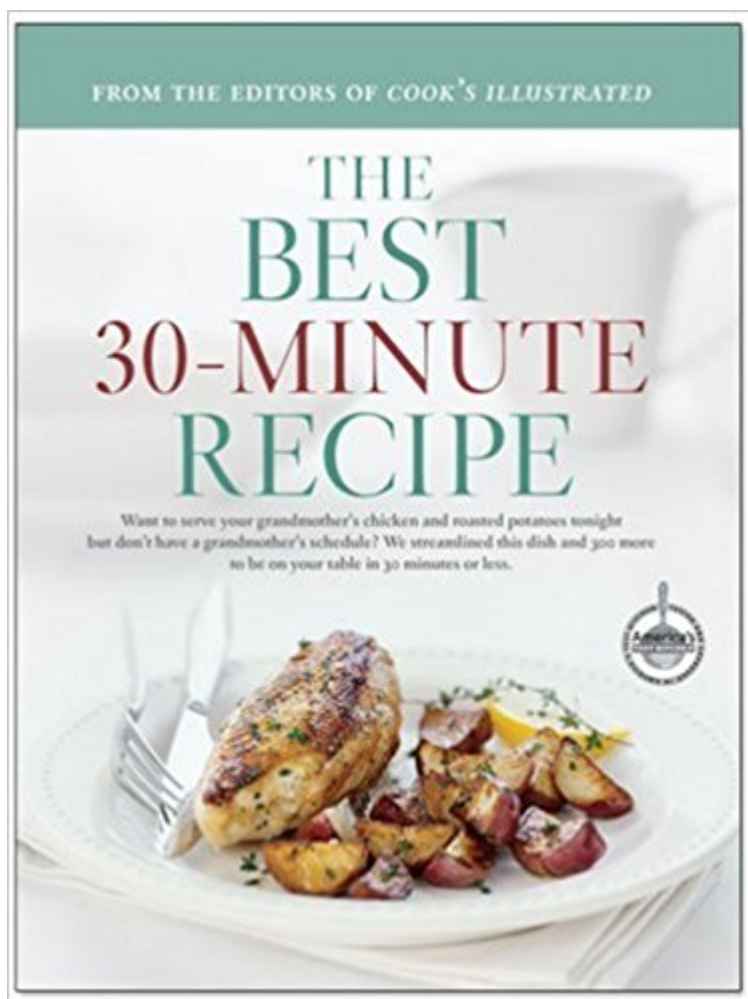


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The Best 30-Minute Recipe



Synopsis

300 Fast and Flavorful Recipes from America's Most Trusted Test Kitchen Tired of quick recipes that aren't really quick or don't taste very good? While some cookbooks promise 30-minute meals, America's Test Kitchen delivers. The Best 30-Minute Recipe is packed with more than 300 great-tasting recipes, along with time-saving techniques that will help you become more efficient in the kitchen. You'll also find honest evaluations of ingredients important to quick cooking, such as chicken broth, preshredded cheese, instant rice, and more. And because the type of equipment you use is important to the success of any recipe made in 30 minutes or not, we tell you which brands are worth buying. The Best 30-Minute Recipe features a surprisingly wide range of recipes. You get not only the very best versions of naturally quick dishes like salads and stir-fries, but also quick and easy recipes for typically long-cooking dishes that you'd never even think of making on a weeknight, including meatloaf, lasagna, beef pot pie, and a pad thai so easy that you may never call for takeout again. With efficiency and good taste, The Best 30-Minute Recipe is the time-pressed cook's guide to getting dinner on the table, night after night.

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Customer Reviews

Most quick recipes deliver speed but not flavor. They often rely on silly shortcuts (no, you can't stuff bell peppers with raw ground beef and onions) and second-rate convenience products (think canned soup). No wonder most "quick" recipes are fast but forgettable. In The Best 30-Minute Recipe, America's Test Kitchen turns its crew of test cooks loose on the world of

quick cooking in an effort to find flavor, not just convenience. Many dishes are naturally quick—stir-fries, hearty salads, skillet sautés, and simple pasta dishes—but they also need to be full-flavored and foolproof. We have streamlined these dishes, subtracting an ingredient or shortcutting a cooking method, to make them memorable and dependable. But some recipes seem impossible to make in a mere 30 minutes. How about a richly flavored chicken stew that typically takes more than an hour at best? Parcook chicken thighs in the microwave to jump start the cooking. Meatloaf? Downsize one large meatloaf into four individual servings and brown them in a skillet. Baked ziti? Make the entire dish in a skillet, where the pasta cooks in a richly seasoned tomato sauce instead of a big pot of boiling water. And forget about second-rate supermarket shortcuts. Once you try our Quick and Crunchy Breaded Pork Chops, you'll never be tempted by a store-bought breading mix again. Our recipe has all the convenience of the shake-and-bake version, but it tastes worlds better. We also discovered that many "quick" recipes fail to include prep times. In The Best 30-Minute Recipe, every test cook used a timer to be sure every recipe really can be prepared, cooked, and on the table in 30 minutes or less. And if a recipe was cutting it close, we looked for acceptable shortcuts. When we couldn't make a creamy chicken and rice casserole in 30 minutes, we turned to instant rice (sautéed in butter to improve the rice's texture and flavor) with excellent results. Special features include "Got Extra Time?" which provides suggestions and recipe alterations that will make a good dish even better if you have a few extra minutes to spend in the kitchen. Other features like "Making the Minutes Count" and "Kitchen Shortcuts" help you prep and cook more efficiently, giving you skills you can use for a lifetime of cooking. Organized around the most logical ways to think about quick cooking, The Best 30-Minute Recipe will lead you right to the type of dish you feel like making. Want to make an entire meal in a skillet? Turn to "Skillet Suppers" for dishes like Skillet Steak Fajitas and Skillet Paella. Feel like preparing a simple, flavorful sauce while your pasta boils? Choose from dozens of options in "While the Pasta Cooks." You can also check out "Skillet Pasta," recipes that cook the pasta right in the skillet with the sauce, saving you time and leaving you with just one pot to wash. Another chapter, "Starting with Leftovers," offers appealing ideas for turning last night's dinner into a completely new meal, such as Asian Spicy Noodles with Beef and Spinach or Curry in a Hurry. The test kitchen also evaluated dozens of popular convenience foods important to quick cooking, from ready-to-use minced garlic and jarred tomato sauce to preshredded cheese, precooked bacon, and more. If a product didn't make the cut, you won't find it in our recipes. Put disappointing quick recipes behind you. The Best 30-Minute Recipe will help you get dinner on the table quickly—a dinner that you can really enjoy! Fast food isn't good food unless you use

just the right ingredients and the right combination of techniques. So don't sacrifice flavor. Don't sacrifice the pleasures of the table. Let America's most trusted test kitchen show you how to cook both quickly and well. With The Best 30-Minute Recipe, satisfying, home-cooked meals really are just minutes away.

I bought this ... oh, six or seven years ago ... and my family would starve if anything ever happened to it. With apologies to Mark Bittman, Irma Rombauer, and Betty Crocker, there isn't a more useful, reliable everyday cookbook on the market. (In fact, I'm eating the Quick Pozole recipe as I write this.) I've tried about 60 or 70 of the book's 300-or-so recipes, and with one possible exception, every one has been a winner. American Chop Suey, Skillet Mac and Cheese, Skillet Lasagna, 30-Minute Chicken Provencal, Carrot-Ginger Soup, Skillet Tamale Pie, Skillet Shepherd's Pie, Three-Bean Chili, and 30-Minute Country Captain are a few of our favorites, though I could go on. To know: *The recipes are aimed at moderately experienced home cooks, though I think most people can handle them. *The recipes really do take 30 minutes (35-40, tops), unless you're pretty new to cooking. *There are enough vegetarian recipes to make it a worthwhile buy for non-meat-eaters, though I would direct vegans elsewhere. *As with Cook's Illustrated in general, there are very few pictures and a couple of diagrams. I don't miss them, though. The descriptions are thorough and easy to understand. *I try to eat healthy, and the book supports that endeavor. (Mac and cheese aside.) Seriously, stop looking at other cookbooks and buy this thing right now. You won't be sorry (but you will be full).

Cook's Illustrated is the BEST series of cookbooks that I have found. They have a test kitchen where cooking techniques, cooking utensils, every possible ingredient (and the amount for each recipe), and every recipe is tested over and over until the ultimate recipe has been selected. This book is right up there with their best! Some of our favorite recipes from this book (and they REALLY ONLY TAKE 30 MINUTES) include 30-Minute Chicken Provencal, Fast All-American Beef Chili, Stir-Fried Beef and Broccoli with Orange-Sesame Sauce and many, many more! I highly recommend this cookbook!

I've owned this cookbook for over a month and I can't say enough good things about it. I own several ATK cookbooks, including the big Best Recipe (original and new edition), Best International Recipes, and Best Cover and Bake Recipes (the last one I also highly recommend). When you cook a recipe from these folks, you're basically guaranteed it's going to come out tasting good. But, at

least with the other books, you are often committing yourself to 1.5 hours of cooking. I don't mind that every now and then when entertaining or on a weekend, but that's simply not practical for busy people, i.e. moms, workers, etc. Not so with Best 30 Min recipe. My husband works long hours in finance and I am a physician in a demanding residency program, but thanks to this cook book, I make about 3 fresh, homemade meals a week. We make it through the rest of the week thanks to yummy leftovers and eating out once or twice. On the weekend, I look through the book, pick 3 recipes, go grocery shopping for the week and then have ingredients on hand for 3 meals that really do only take 30 minutes. A few have taken a few minutes longer, but in general they actually keep to 30 minutes. As other people have mentioned, the tips on doing things faster or "best jarred tomato sauce" are very helpful. For instance, now when serving pasta, I drain the boiling water into the serving bowl and let it sit until ready to serve. So I now serve my steaming pasta in a hot piece of Polish pottery which keeps the pasta warm at the table. Here are the recipes I've tried so far and have loved:

1. Skillet lasagna - the noodles are simmered in the sauce soaking up delicious tomato and sausage flavors, and my husband loved only one pan to clean!
2. Baja-style Fish Tacos - with chipotle mayo - wonderful
3. Beef teriyaki - I cook some brown rice the day before b/c it takes an hour, then microwave to serve with this yummy homemade sauce. Forget that nasty manufactured stuff in a bottle.
4. Italian Sausage and Peppers and Hoagies - super easy, in a zesty, fresh tomato sauce
5. Asparagus, Ham and Gruyere Frittata - made for breakfast for my grandma, would be wonderful for a ladies only brunch (served with the Baked French Toast from "Best Cover and Bake")
6. Pasta with 20min Tomato, Vodka, Cream Sauce - go heavy on the red pepper and saute the garlic with some chopped prociutto. A very classy, but not-too-heavy meal for company with a green veggie or salad.
7. Pasta with Roasted Red Pepper Cream Sauce - so easy and yummy
8. Mix and match stir fry's with several different homemade sauces
9. Un-stuffed chicken breasts with Dijon, Ham, and Gruyere - like cordon bleu, but easier!

Nine recipes (and counting) that I love in one cookbook; that's more than I can say for any other book on my whole shelf!

Haven't loved:

1. Skillet Lamb Shepherd's pie - okay, just not super flavorful.
2. Seared Sea Scallops with Orzo - kind of bland, main flavoring came from capers, which it turns out I don't like. Orzo just can't substitute for risotto, which of course takes much longer than 30 min.

I completely disagree with the criticism about ATK repackaging recipes and selling again. At least as far as this book is concerned. (Yes, it's true, I wouldn't recommend the Best International Recipes for that reason. The good recipes are located in the other books I own.) But the 30 min book is VERY different. Really tailored to those people who want to put a delicious, home cooked meal on the table in 30 minutes. I own a few of the Rachel Ray 30 min cookbooks. While I do like how she pairs together foods to make a meal, and uses lots

of fresh vegetables, they rarely take only 30 min to prepare (hello? washing and chopping takes time!), are hit and miss on tastiness, and talk about repackaging recipes?? Sheesh. They just keep repeating. So all in all. This is best cookbook I've ever owned. I've already gifted it to my mom. We talk constantly about what we've cooked and what we like. Planning to give it to friends and sisters for every birthday/holiday until everyone has one.

I've been an amateur cook for about ten years now, and received this book last Christmas. While it's not a compendium in the form of Julia Child or the New best Recipe or even the Silver Spoon, it is an incredible assemblage of weeknight recipes. I find that most of them take me closer to forty-five minutes (I'm not a pro chef, so i can't mince an onion in less than a few minutes) but nearly all of them have yielded delicious meals that have entered into regular rotation for my family. The portions are usually fine as a main dish for a family of four and none of the recipes require any fancy equipment. Basically, this is the recipe book I reach for every week when doing meal-planning, and the one that I find I go back to night after night. Unlike some other cookbooks, this offers few "basic" recipes you can embroider, but instead focuses on a detailed recipe that works very well as written with one or two exceptions and/or changes based on your stove.

So I bought this book because I needed to have a recipe book that would literally hold my hand while cooking. In the past I have made some pretty terrible mistakes while cooking. This book not only has delicious recipes but it walks you through each step and enough gives advice on what are good items to purchase for that specific recipe.

This and Make-Ahead Recipes are my two favorite cookbooks. Be warned, I've never been able to complete any of these recipes in 30 minutes. (And some of them, if you just add up the different recommended times it adds to more than 30 minutes... so I'm not sure how in the world they expect anyone to complete them in a half an hour). Most recipes I can complete in 45 minutes though. Every recipe I've made has been yummy. Some I repeat often (Chicken Fricasse is one of my favorites!), and others were tasty, but I didn't feel motivated to make them again.

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