

Must-Have Kitchen Essentials

These are the **absolute necessities** for a functional kitchen. If you're setting up a kitchen from scratch, **this is all you really need!**

◆ **1. Cookware & Bakeware (Multi-Purpose & Durable)**

- ✓ **1 Large Stainless Steel Stock Pot** - For soups, pasta, and boiling.
- ✓ **1 Medium Stainless Steel Saucepan** - For sauces, oatmeal, and small meals.
- ✓ **1 Large Stainless Steel or Cast Iron Skillet** - For frying, sautéing, and searing.
- ✓ **1 Baking Sheet (Rimmed, Heavy-Duty)** - For roasting veggies, making cookies, or sheet pan meals.
- ✓ **1 9x13 Casserole Dish (Glass or Stainless Steel)** - For casseroles, lasagna, and roasting.
- ✓ **1 Muffin Tin (12-cup standard size)** - For muffins, egg cups, and portioned-out meals.

💡 **Pro Tip:** If you bake often, add a **second baking sheet** and a **small (8x8) baking dish**.

◆ **2. Essential Knives & Cutting Tools**

- ✓ **1 Chef's Knife** - The most versatile knife for chopping, slicing, and dicing.
- ✓ **1 Paring Knife** - For peeling, small cutting jobs, and fruit prep.
- ✓ **1 Serrated Bread Knife** - For slicing bread, tomatoes, and soft items.
- ✓ **1 Cutting Board (Wood or Plastic, NOT glass!)** - Glass dulls knives quickly.

💡 **Pro Tip:** A **knife sharpener** is an excellent investment to keep your knives in top shape!

◆ **3. Measuring & Mixing Tools**

- ✓ **1 Set of Measuring Cups (Dry Ingredients)** - For flour, sugar, etc.
- ✓ **1 Liquid Measuring Cup (Glass, 2-cup size recommended)** - For liquids.
- ✓ **1 Set of Measuring Spoons** - Essential for accurate recipes.
- ✓ **1 Large Mixing Bowl (Stainless Steel or Glass)** - Great for everything from dough to salad.
- ✓ **1 Medium Mixing Bowl** - For general food prep and mixing.

💡 **Pro Tip:** Stainless steel bowls **last forever** and can double as double-boilers when placed over a pot of simmering water!

◆ **4. Cooking Utensils (Multi-Purpose & Durable)**

- ✓ **1 Spatula (Heat-Resistant Silicone)** - For stirring, mixing, and scraping.
- ✓ **1 Wooden Spoon** - Safe for all cookware and great for sauces.
- ✓ **1 Whisk** - For beating eggs, sauces, and baking.
- ✓ **1 Slotted Spoon** - For serving and draining foods.
- ✓ **1 Ladle** - For soups, stews, and serving.
- ✓ **1 Pair of Tongs** - Great for grilling, turning meats, and tossing salads.
- ✓ **1 Pancake Flipper/Turner** - For flipping burgers, pancakes, and eggs.
- ✓ **1 Can Opener (Handheld is Best)** - Because canned food is inevitable.

💡 **Pro Tip:** Look for utensils with **stainless steel cores** for longevity and heat resistance!

◆ **5. Food Storage & Organization**

- ✓ **3-5 Airtight Storage Containers (Glass or BPA-Free Plastic)** - For leftovers and pantry storage.
- ✓ **1 Set of Ziplock Bags (Gallon & Quart Size)** - For food storage and meal prep.
- ✓ **1 Set of Mason Jars (Various Sizes)** - Great for storing dry goods, dressings, and even leftovers.
- ✓ **1 Dish Drying Mat or Dish Rack** - To keep drying dishes tidy.

💡 **Pro Tip:** Using **clear storage containers** helps keep food visible and reduces waste!

◆ **6. Small Appliances (Only What You Need!)**

- ✓ **1 Handheld Mixer** - For basic baking needs.
- ✓ **1 Blender (Basic or High-Powered, Based on Your Needs)** - For smoothies, soups, and sauces.
- ✓ **1 Slow Cooker or Instant Pot** - Saves time on meals.

💡 **Pro Tip:** A slow cooker is **amazing for batch cooking and meal prepping!**

◆ 7. Kitchen Linens & Cleaning Tools

- ✓ **2-3 Dish Towels (Absorbent Cotton or Microfiber)** - For drying dishes.
- ✓ **2-3 Washcloths or Sponges** - For scrubbing dishes and countertops.
- ✓ **1 Set of Hot Pads or Oven Mitts** - To safely handle hot cookware.
- ✓ **1 Trash Can (Preferably 10+ Gallons)** - The right size prevents frequent emptying.
- ✓ **1 Small Compost Bin (Optional, But Great for Reducing Waste)**

💡 **Pro Tip:** Skip paper towels and opt for reusable **microfiber cloths** to save money!

🔴 What You Can Get Later (Nice to Have, But Not Essential!)

These are **helpful but not necessary right away**. If you have the budget or space, these items can **make cooking and storage more efficient**.

◆ "Nice to Have" Cooking & Baking Tools

- ◆ **Dutch Oven** - Great for soups, bread baking, and slow-cooked meals.
- ◆ **Cast Iron Skillet** - Lasts forever and adds incredible flavor!
- ◆ **Pizza Stone** - If you love homemade pizza, this is a game changer.
- ◆ **Extra Mixing Bowls & Baking Dishes** - If you bake frequently, these are handy.

◆ "Nice to Have" Small Appliances

- ◆ **Air Fryer** - If you love crispy foods without deep frying.
- ◆ **Electric Kettle** - Perfect if you drink tea or need boiling water quickly.
- ◆ **Stand Mixer (KitchenAid, etc.)** - Amazing for baking, but a handheld mixer works fine.
- ◆ **Toaster Oven** - A good alternative to a microwave for reheating food.
- ◆ **Food Processor** - Helpful for chopping, shredding, and making sauces.

💡 **Pro Tip:** Only buy appliances if you use them at least weekly!

◆ "Nice to Have" Kitchen Gadgets

- ◆ **Salad Spinner** - If you eat a lot of fresh greens.
- ◆ **Garlic Press** - A sharp knife works just as well!
- ◆ **Immersion Blender** - For soups, sauces, and baby food.
- ◆ **Ice Cream Maker** - Fun, but not an everyday necessity.
- ◆ **Panini Press** - You can make grilled sandwiches in a regular pan.

- ◆ **Bread Machine** - Only if you make a lot of bread. (or a dough machine)