



IN THE KITCHEN

Dress It Up: 3 Tips for a Better Salad



To some, salads are the epitome of boring. If that's you—and we mean no harm in saying this—you're not doing it right. From [choice of greens](#) to [varied textures](#) to [balanced flavors](#), there are so many elements that go into making that decadent, filling salad. But, no matter how fantastic your selection is, it's the dressing that ties it all together—without a simple homemade salad dressing, it's just a pile of sad veggies (and maybe a protein or two) looking for love. Here at Plated, we're committed to keeping your salads well dressed, and there's more to it than you might think. So, we've put together a comprehensive guide to the different techniques that ensure an emulsified (more on that later), smooth, and complementary dressing for each and every salad. Eat your veggies in style, kids.

The Easy Way to Create Irresistible Salad Dressing



Shake it to make it

Whether or not you make our tantalizing shallot vinaigrette below (we highly recommend you do), be sure to hold on to this humble jam jar technique. Instead of buying something at the grocery store, just [repurpose that random jam jar you were going to toss!](#) Combine all ingredients, and shake it up until it all comes together! You'll get a little work out and dressing for your future salads.

You'll Need

1 empty jam jar

1 minced shallot
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Combine all ingredients in your jam jar and shake.

**Whisk it up**

When making salad dressing, emulsification is key. It occurs when two ingredients that don't generally combine (oil and vinegar, for example), bind together and thicken. Emulsification is done slowly, adding one ingredient at a time while mixing rapidly. It's the difference between a thick, luscious vinaigrette and a thin one where the oil keeps separating. To make sure your dressing is the former, you need to whisk continuously, and add your oil slowly so that it bonds with the other ingredients. Try this method with a garlicky Parmesan vinaigrette:

Ingredients

1 clove garlic
Juice of 1.5 lemons
1.5 tablespoons grated Parmesan
3 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt
Black pepper

Instructions

On a cutting board, mince garlic and sprinkle over .25 teaspoon salt. Using a large knife, carefully scrape over mixture at a 45° angle, pressing down. Repeat until garlic is broken down and a paste forms. Place garlic paste in a large bowl along with lemon juice, Parmesan, salt, and pepper as desired. Whisk in olive oil, working gradually, until fully combined.

Blender Bender

The fast-whirring blender makes a fabulous tool for emulsifying a perfectly smooth salad dressing, especially when herbs, garlic or other hearty ingredients are involved. If you had a food processor, feel free to use that, too. Take a stab at your blender dressing (or, blessing?) skills with this buttermilk herb recipe, which is delicious on a salad and as a dip!

Ingredients

1/4 cup buttermilk
1/3 cup Greek yogurt
1/2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1/4 bunch fresh chives, sliced
Leaves from 1/4 bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 clove garlic, chopped
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt
Black pepper

Instructions

In a blender, pulse together the buttermilk, yogurt, vinegar, chives, parsley, and garlic until smooth. Then, with the blender on its lowest setting, slowly add the olive oil. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed.