

# faster & fresher

BY NICKI SIZEMORE | PHOTOS QUENTIN BACON | FOOD STYLING CARRIE PURCELL | PROP STYLING KATE PARISIAN



## That food processor gathering dust in the back of your cupboard? It just might be your ticket to a quicker dinner tonight.

Come dinnertime, I need all the help I can get. As I'm corralling the kids, helping with homework, and putting away the piles of stuff (piles!) that materialize every day, getting home-cooked food on the table can feel daunting. Who has time to chop veggies, shred cheese, and make homemade sauces?

Well, actually, I do—thanks to Betty, my food processor. Now, I realize it might sound nuts to name a countertop appliance, but I use my machine to shave my prep time, streamline recipes, and knock out from-scratch meals nearly every evening. And anybody who helps you out that much deserves a name, right?

Whenever a recipe calls for chopping, shredding, grating, slicing, puréeing, or mixing, I call on Betty. If I'm making a soup, stew, sauce, or gratin, I run all the vegetables through the food processor. It takes Betty seconds to chop or slice them, as opposed to the 10 minutes or so it would take me with a knife. And since the ingredients are so finely cut (or just more consistently sized), they cook more quickly and evenly, too. The food processor also can whip up chopped salads and no-cook sauces, including my family's favorite salsa verde, in mere minutes.

Instead of grating cheese by hand, I use the food processor's shredding disk to quickly break down blocks of cheese for quesadillas, macaroni and cheese, or casseroles. (Added benefit: No box grater = no bloody knuckles!) Betty also mows down vegetables (like potatoes, cabbage, and carrots) for quick hashes and slaws in no time.

Not yet convinced? Try the recipes that follow—three favorites from my house and three from Allrecipes.com that I've sped up with Betty's help, all delicious and ready in under an hour. Who knows? You might end up naming your food processor, too.



CHOPPING



SLICING

### about the writer



Nicki Sizemore had long worked as a cooking instructor, but it wasn't until she had her first child (and her life got permanently nuts) that she discovered the full potential of her food processor. That's what led her to launch *From Scratch Fast*, a blog about what she feeds her husband and two girls at their home in New York's Hudson Valley, and to write *The Food Processor Family Cookbook*, published in 2016. She goes by Nickisizemore on Allrecipes.com.



# smarter storage

*I used to keep my food processor in a cabinet under the counter. Guess what? I never used it. The key to good storage is accessibility. If you see it, you will use it. Plus, if it's right there, you won't have to lug that heavy base around.*

**ONE** Clear out a roughly 8x12-inch spot for your machine on the countertop or a shelf at arm's height, even if it means hanging utensils on a wall or putting fruit in a hanging basket.

**TWO** Store the machine assembled with the chopping blade, since that's the one you'll use most often. Stash disks, accessories, and an extension cord if needed in a basket nearby.

**THREE** If, like me, you have a mini food processor in addition to the full-size model, keep the smaller one in a cabinet. It's lighter and more portable. Just don't forget it's there!

## A NOTE FROM Nicki

*For this kid favorite, I used the food processor to make quick work of the veggies. And I pressed my hard-working machine into double duty: I substituted block cheeses for pre-shredded and sent them through the food processor's shredding disk. Block cheeses are often less expensive than those you buy already shredded. Plus, freshly grated cheese makes for extra-goopy quesadillas.*



★★★★★

617 REVIEWS

prep 15 min  
cook 20 min  
ready 35 min  
serves 8

submitted by:  
heather



WILEMON

*"I omitted the bacon, used green chile peppers and green onions instead of bell peppers and onion, and made my own fajita-type seasoning that was not as spicy."*

## Chicken Quesadillas

[armagazine.com/chicken-quesadillas](http://armagazine.com/chicken-quesadillas)

- 2 green bell peppers, quartered
- 2 red bell peppers, quartered
- 1 onion, quartered
- 8 ounces cheddar cheese
- 8 ounces Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into strips
- 1 (1-ounce) packet fajita seasoning
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 8 (8- to 9-inch) whole-wheat or white flour tortillas
- 2 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- Sour cream and chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

1. Pulse peppers and onion in a food processor until finely chopped. Transfer to a bowl. Fit processor with shredding disk and use it to shred cheeses.
2. Preheat broiler and position rack 6 inches from heat source. Grease 3 baking sheets. Toss chicken with fajita seasoning and arrange on 1 prepared baking sheet. Broil until chicken is longer pink in center, about 5 minutes. Position racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 350°F.
3. Heat oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Cook peppers and onion with salt, stirring, until vegetables are tender and most of liquid has evaporated, about 6 minutes. Stir in chicken and cook until heated through and well combined, about 1 minute. *[From our kitchen: Filling can be made up to 3 days ahead and chilled, covered.]*
4. Arrange tortillas on remaining 2 prepared baking sheets. Spoon about ½ cup chicken and vegetable mixture onto left half of each tortilla. Sprinkle with cheeses and bacon, then fold right half of each tortilla over filling. *[From our kitchen: You can assemble quesadillas up to this point and freeze, individually wrapped in foil and stacked in a large zip-top plastic freezer bag, for up to 1 month. It's not necessary to thaw before proceeding.]*
5. Bake until cheeses melt, about 10 minutes. Cut each quesadilla into 3 wedges. Top with sour cream and cilantro (if using).

PER 3-WEDGE SERVING: 507 CAL; 27.4g FAT (13.8g SAT); 32g PRO; 32g CARB; 4.8g FIBER; 1,077mg SODIUM; 104mg CHOL

MAGGIE MCGUIRE

*"Like many other cooks, I sandwiched two tortillas for each quesadilla (rather than folding one in half) and then cut them into fourths for the serving platter."*





## A NOTE FROM Nicki

Whenever I need to escape the everyday, I make this dish. The vibrant green “salsa” (Italian for “sauce”) includes herbs, capers, garlic, shallot, and anchovy (don’t be put off by the anchovy—it adds depth, but you won’t taste it specifically). With the help of a mini food processor, it comes together in minutes. If you have only a large food processor, make a double batch of the salsa. It’s just as good on chicken or fish.

**BRAND-NEW  
RECIPE! GO  
ONLINE TO RATE  
AND REVIEW.**

prep 20 min  
cook 5 min  
ready 50 min  
(includes marinating  
and resting)  
serves 4

submitted by:  
nickisizemore

GLUTEN-FREE

### Tuscan Skirt Steak with Salsa Verde

[armagazine.com/tuscan-skirt-steak](http://armagazine.com/tuscan-skirt-steak)

#### For Steak

- 3 large cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ pounds skirt steak
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

#### For Salsa

- ½ small shallot, peeled
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1½ teaspoons drained capers
- 1 anchovy fillet, rinsed and patted dry
- 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary leaves
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1 cup lightly packed parsley leaves
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped walnuts

- 2 to 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

#### Marinate Steak:

1. Process garlic, rosemary, and thyme in a mini food processor until finely chopped. Scrape down sides. Add oil and pulse to combine.
2. Trim steak of excess fat and cut crosswise in half or thirds for easier grilling. Put in a large zip-top plastic bag, then add garlic-herb mixture, seal, and turn to coat. Marinate at room temperature 30 to 60 minutes or chill up to 24 hours.

#### Meanwhile, Make Salsa:

3. Process shallot and garlic in mini food processor until finely chopped. Scrape down sides. Add capers, anchovy, rosemary, thyme, parsley, walnuts, vinegar, pepper, and salt. Process until finely chopped, scraping down sides

occasionally. Add oil and process until well blended. Transfer to a bowl and let sit at room temperature 10 minutes to 1 hour. [From our kitchen: Salsa can be made 1 week ahead and chilled in an airtight container or zip-top plastic bag or frozen for up to 1 month.]

#### Cook Steak:

4. Preheat a stovetop grill pan (or an outdoor grill) to medium-high (375°F to 400°F). Oil pan or grate. Remove steak from marinade. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill, covered if using outdoor grill, until browned with visible grill marks, 2 to 3 minutes per side for medium-rare.
5. Transfer to a cutting board and tent with foil. Let stand 10 minutes. Slice thinly against grain and serve with salsa.

PER SERVING (4 OUNCES STEAK AND 3 TABLESPOONS SALSA): 594 CAL; 51g FAT (12.1g SAT); 36g PRO; 2.7g CARB; 1g FIBER; 616mg SODIUM; 110mg CHOL



# cleaning tips

**Let's face it: Cleaning a food processor is no fun. But with a few tricks, it's really no harder than washing a knife and mixing bowls.** Start with the blade (or disk). You can either de-gunk it with a spatula or reassemble the empty machine and pulse a few times to fling stuck-on food from the blade. From there, wash the blade with soapy water and a long-handled scrub brush. The work bowl and lid can get a soapy hand-washing, too, or go straight into the dishwasher.

SUZYQ

"I never would have thought to turn summer squash into a soup, but this was surprisingly delicious! My husband added some shredded cheddar to his bowl and liked it both ways."

LILSN00

"I used vegetable broth because I was out of chicken broth, and I used an immersion blender to blend everything right in the pot. I'll be making this one again!"

## A NOTE FROM Nicki

Using the food processor on both the front and back ends of this recipe really speeds things along. The machine chops and slices all the veggies and purées the whole works after it's cooked. Again, there's no need to wash the work bowl or blades between ingredients, so you're getting a lot of work from just one washing. And since the veggies are all finely and evenly chopped, they cook faster.



10 REVIEWS

prep 10 min  
cook 25 min  
ready 35 min  
serves 6

submitted by:  
jsquilts

HIDDEN GEM

### Yellow Squash Soup

[armagazine.com/yellow-squash-soup](http://armagazine.com/yellow-squash-soup)

- 2 onions, each cut into 8 wedges
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and halved lengthwise
- 2 carrots, peeled
- 5 medium-size yellow squash or zucchini (about 2 pounds total), trimmed and halved lengthwise
- 5 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon black pepper, plus more for garnish

1. Pulse onions in a food processor until finely chopped. Melt butter in a heavy 5-quart pot

over medium heat. Cook onions, stirring, until translucent, 3 to 4 minutes.

2. Fit processor with slicing disk and, working in batches, use it to thinly slice potatoes, carrots, and squash. Add vegetables to pot along with broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in basil, salt, and pepper.

3. Fit processor with chopping blade and, working in small batches, pulse and then blend soup until smooth. Garnish with additional basil and pepper.

[From our kitchen: Soup can be made 3 days ahead and chilled, covered, or frozen up to 1 month.]

PER  $\frac{1}{3}$ -CUP SERVING: 138 CAL; 4.4g FAT (2.6g SAT); 4.8g PRO; 22.3g CARB; 3.6g FIBER; 400mg SODIUM; 10mg CHOL



## A NOTE FROM Nicki

While a gratin might seem like a fussy dish, this recipe makes it totally simple. The food processor does the hard work of shredding the cheese and slicing the potatoes. All you do is start cooking the gratin on the stovetop—a trick I learned in cooking school that coats the potatoes and speeds the cooking—and then bake it until browned, bubbly, and absolutely irresistible.



**BRAND-NEW RECIPE! GO ONLINE TO RATE AND REVIEW.**

prep 10 min  
cook 40 min  
ready 55 min  
serves 6

submitted by:  
nickisizemore

VEGETARIAN

### Pretty Darn Quick Potato Gratin

[armagazine.com/pdq-potato-gratin](http://armagazine.com/pdq-potato-gratin)

- 4 ounces Gruyère or Comté cheese
  - 4 large Yukon gold potatoes (about 2 pounds), peeled
  - 1½ cups half-and-half
  - 1 large clove garlic, peeled, grated with a Microplane or very finely minced (¾ teaspoon)
  - ¾ teaspoon salt
  - Pinch freshly grated nutmeg
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter an 8-inch square baking dish.
  2. Fit a food processor with shredding disk and use it to shred cheese. Transfer to a small bowl. Fit processor with slicing disk and use it to slice potatoes.
  3. Put potatoes in a large saucepan with half-and-half, garlic, salt, and nutmeg and stir gently to combine. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Cook at a gentle boil, stirring often with a heat-safe spatula to prevent sticking, until half-and-half has reduced and thickly coats potatoes, about 8 minutes.
  4. Spoon into prepared baking dish. Smooth top and sprinkle evenly with cheese. [From our kitchen: You can prepare the dish up to this point 1 day ahead and chill, covered with foil, then uncover and bake as directed.]
  5. Bake until potatoes are tender when pierced with a knife and top is golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

PER 2½X4-INCH SERVING: 262 CAL; 12.5g FAT (7.9g SAT); 9.8g PRO; 28.2g CARB; 1.8g FIBER; 468mg SODIUM; 42mg CHOL

## getting it together

**If you fumble every time you try to assemble your food processor, you're not alone.**

Even big-name TV chefs struggle with this. That's partly because every model is different: Some have lids that lock with the feed tube in the front, others with it positioned in the back. Until you get to know your machine, try sticking a small piece of masking tape on the front of both the work bowl and the lid; when they're aligned, you're in business!

## key pieces and parts

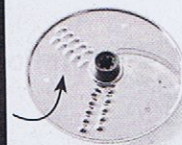
**Aside from the base, the work bowl, and the lid, these three\* attachments are all you need:**

CHOPPING BLADE



Used for chopping, mixing, puréeing, and kneading, this versatile S-shaped blade is the one you'll use most often.

SHREDDING DISK



Ideal for shredding vegetables and grating cheese, it also can be used for chopping nuts uniformly and shaving chocolate.

SLICING DISK



Like a mandoline that you'll never cut your fingers on, it's perfect for thinly and evenly slicing vegetables, firm cheeses, and cured sausages.



**BRAND-NEW  
RECIPE! GO  
ONLINE TO RATE  
AND REVIEW.**

prep 15 min  
ready 25 min  
makes 6 cups

submitted by:  
nickisizemore

HEALTHY & QUICK

## Chopped Power Salad

[armagazine.com/chopped-power-salad](http://armagazine.com/chopped-power-salad)

- 3 cups cauliflower florets  
(about 1 small head)
- 3 cups broccoli florets  
(about 1 small head)
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and  
cut into a few big pieces
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup lightly packed fresh  
cilantro leaves
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup lightly packed fresh  
parsley leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup golden raisins
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup toasted pumpkin seeds
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup plus 1 tablespoon  
apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon black pepper

**1.** Pulse cauliflower in a food processor until finely chopped, about 15 to 20 pulses. Scrape into a large bowl. Pulse broccoli until finely chopped, about 15 to 20 pulses. Scrape into bowl. Process carrots until finely chopped, about 10 seconds. Scrape into bowl.

**2.** With food processor running, drop garlic through feed tube to chop. Scrape down sides. Add cilantro and parsley and pulse until finely chopped. Scrape mixture into bowl with vegetables. Add oil, raisins, pumpkin seeds, vinegar, salt, and pepper to bowl and stir until well combined. Let stand 10 minutes.

[From our kitchen: Salad can be made up to 2 days ahead and chilled, covered.]

PER  $\frac{3}{4}$ -CUP SERVING: 223 CAL; 18.9g FAT  
(2.9g SAT); 5g PRO; 12.7g CARB; 3g FIBER;  
182mg SODIUM; 0mg CHOL

### A NOTE FROM Nicki

This super-nutritious salad tastes so good and comes together so quickly that you won't even care how healthy it is. The food processor chops all the veggies into small bits that soak up flavor fast. And although you'll be opening the processor often to remove and add veggies, there's no need to wash the work bowl between each batch.

### check your blade

Late last year, Cuisinart issued a voluntary recall on a riveted style of S-shaped chopping blades included with about 8 million of the food processors it sold from 1996 through 2015. The company found that small metal pieces of those blades could break off and end up in food (definitely not good eats). To see if your model is affected and request a free replacement blade, visit [recall.cuisinart.com](http://recall.cuisinart.com).