

Making an Olive Oil Salad Dressing

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"Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 2 tablespoons (23 grams) of olive oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the monounsaturated fat in olive oil. To achieve this possible benefit, olive oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day."~ Food & Drug Administration qualified health claim for olive oil.

What healthier way to enjoy olive oil than as part of a salad dressing served over a salad filled with nutritious fruits and vegetables? Here's how to make a basic olive oil dressing using the guidelines for classic French vinaigrette.



Classic French vinaigrette is typically three to four parts oil (usually extra virgin olive oil) and one part acid (frequently red wine vinegar). Seasonings include salt, pepper (freshly ground) and often Dijon mustard and/or garlic. You may be able to use less oil and more acid ingredient if you use one of the following in your dressing: rice vinegar; white wine vinegar; raspberry, blueberry or other fruit vinegar; champagne vinegar; lemon, lime or orange juice. Start experimenting by beginning with two parts oil to one part vinegar or citrus juice.

While lime and lemon juice can stand alone in salad dressings, you'll get more flavor by combining orange juice with vinegar. *Joy of Cooking* (Simon & Schuster Inc., 1997) recommends distilled white vinegar is best used in pickling, not salad dressings.

For a better flavor, thoroughly mix the oil and vinegar. The standard procedure is to whisk the vinegar with the salt, pepper and any other seasonings. Then add the oil in a slow stream, whisking constantly, until dressing is translucent. Or, shake the ingredients together in a small jar with a tight-fitting lid. If not using dressing right away, whisk or shake again before using.

Plan to use about 1 tablespoon of oil/vinegar dressing per 2 cups of salad. Dress, don't drown, your salad to keep the calories lower.

Use the basic recipe on the next page to start making olive oil dressings for your salads!

Basic Oil/Vinegar Salad Dressing

(Adjust amounts given in table according to personal taste)

DIRECTIONS: Whisk together vinegar and any additional seasonings. Slowly add olive oil and whisk in. Or, shake all ingredients together in a small jar with a tight lid. **For safety and freshness, serve homemade dressings the same day you make them.**

Amount of ingredients for YOUR salad	Amount needed for 1 main-dish or 2 side-dish salads	Amount needed for 2 main-dish or 4 side-dish salads	INGREDIENTS
	1-1/2 teaspoons to 1 tablespoon	1 to 2 tablespoons	Balsamic, red wine or white wine vinegar, or lemon juice
TO TASTE			Salt & freshly ground black pepper
	1-1/2 tablespoons	3 tablespoons	Extra virgin olive oil
POSSIBLE ADD-INS			
	1-1/2 teaspoons to 1 tablespoon	1 to 2 tablespoons	Minced shallot
	1/4 to scant 1/2 teaspoon	1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon	Dijon-type mustard
	Dash of garlic powder	1/8 teaspoon powder OR 1 clove	Garlic powder or clove of minced garlic
	A pinch or to taste	A pinch or 2 OR to taste	Sugar
	1-1/2 or more teaspoons	1 or more tablespoons	Chopped fresh herbs