

Guide to Cooking Fats

Fats provide needed energy, add flavor, and can reduce risk for cancer and heart disease (Murray, 2005). But eating the wrong fats can lead to atherosclerosis, cancer, birth defects, and more (Champ, 2012).

When choosing which fats to cook with, follow these guidelines: **(1) Fat content structure** – the more saturated, the less risk for oxidation and damage from free radicals; **(2) High smoke point** – tolerates heat well; **(3) How the oil is made** – use natural fats/oils, avoid processed & refined products (Champ, 2012).

Best Fats/Oils For Cooking	Fats/Oils to Avoid
Natural, saturated & mono, w/ high omega-3	Processed, refined, poly, & high omega-6
<p>Coconut oil – 350 SP, 92% SFA</p> <p>Macadamia oil – 410 SP, 16% SFA, 83% Mono, very good omega-3 : omega-6 ratio (0.2g : 1.3g)</p> <p>Tallow or Lard – 356-370 SP, 41% SFA, 47% Mono, 2% Poly</p> <p>Ghee (clarified butter) – 485 SP, 65% SFA, 32% Mono, 3% Poly</p> <p>Grass-fed butter – 330 SP 66% SFA, 30% Mono, 4% Poly; best at low temps</p> <p>Avocado oil – 485 SP, 12% SFA, 74% Mono</p> <p>Palm oil – 455 SP, 51% SFA, 39% Mono; virgin unrefined is best option (Sisson, 2009)</p>	<p>Man-made Oils – contain unhealthy additives, chemicals, and are potentially toxic</p> <p>Trans fats (hydrogenated oils)</p> <p>Canola oil</p> <p>Margarine/spreads</p> <p>Shortenings</p> <p>Vegetable Oils – the processing required causes oxidation, removes free radical-fighting antioxidants, and adds chemicals & deodorizers to the oils... Not good! Mostly polyunsaturated & high in omega-6</p> <p>Cottonseed oil – 410 SP, 50% Poly</p> <p>Corn oil – 350 SP*, 62% Poly</p> <p>Safflower oil – 225 SP*, 77% Poly</p> <p>Sunflower oil – 225 SP*, 69% Poly</p> <p>Soybean oil – 320 SP*, 61% Poly</p>
Best Used Sparingly at Room Temp	
<p>Olive oil (extra virgin) – 420 SP, 11% Poly; can use at low heat, best used as dressing</p> <p>Flax seed oil – 225 SP, 66% Poly; <i>never</i> heat</p>	<p>Peanut oil – 320 SP*, 33% Poly, 49% Mono</p> <p>Grape seed oil – 410 SP, 71% Poly</p> <p>Ultra-refined Palm oil – highly processed, may be hydrogenated (Sisson, 2009)</p>
<p>SP = smoke point (F) SFA = saturated fats Mono = monounsaturated fats Poly = polyunsaturated fats</p> <p>References: Smoke points & fat composition (Champ); Background on oils (Rose) *Unrefined</p>	

References

- (1) Murray, M. (2005). *Encyclopedia of Healing Foods*. New York: Atria Books
- (2) Champ, C. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.cavemandocor.com/2012/05/27/checking-your-oil-the-definitive-guide-to-cooking-with-fat/>
- (3) Rose, L. (n.d.) <http://www.realfoodkosher.com/complete-guide-to-fats-and-oils/>
- (4) Sisson, M. (2009) <http://www.marksdailyapple.com/palm-oil-nutrition/#axzz2hWvnYTZO>