

3 Hacks to Make any Veggie Taste Darn Good



We all know we need to eat our veggies. But why is it so HARD?!

Dinner time seems to go a little like this...

A small side of boiled broccoli with dinner. Made for the sole purpose of fulfilling today's vegetable quota. Limp, mushy, a strange shade of brownish green, no flavor, broccoli. Obligatorily shoveled down and quickly chased with dinner's more delicious bites.

Instead, picture this...

A heaping pile of perfectly seasoned salty and sweet, sweet potato fries that are cooked until the edges are crispy and the inside is soft and bursting with sweet potato flavor, dunked in a 5 minute spicy honey chipotle sauce. Sweet, spicy, salty, crispy, and saucy. A veggie that takes center stage. That's darn good veggies.

The good news is **EVERYONE** can make veggies that taste this delicious with just 3 simple hacks: season, sear, and sauce.

HACK #1: SEASON

The #1 tip I live by for cooked veggies? Season. And then season some more.

This is the number one reason I see for bland veggies and the easiest way to solve this problem. The magic combo of fat + salt + seasoning will turn any veggie into something magical.

Here is how to get there:

Choose your seasonings. You can select seasoning blends like chili powder, curry powder and everything but the bagel seasoning, or you can mix and match single spices like garlic powder and paprika. Choose what sounds good to you. Most seasoning pair well with all veggies.

Know your amounts. As I said, most veggies are drastically under seasoned. So, it may feel like you are over seasoning your vegetables at first, but stay the course and use more seasonings than you think you should. The end result will be flavor packed veggies you don't want to miss.

Here are some of my go to seasonings and usual amounts based on a recipe that would feed 4 people:

- Garlic Powder - 1/2-1 teaspoon
- Onion Powder - 1/2- 1 teaspoon
- Paprika - 1/4-1/2 teaspoon
- Chili Powder - 2-3 teaspoons
- Curry powder - 2-3 teaspoons
- Nutritional Yeast - 1-2 tablespoons
- Everything but the Bagel seasoning - 1-1 1/2 tablespoons
- Pepper - 1/2 teaspoon
- Sea salt - 1/2 teaspoon

Oil may not be a seasoning, but it is essential in the seasoning process. It acts like the glue for our spices to stick to our vegetables. When it comes to oil there is only one rule - use enough to coat the veggies. No more, no less.



Taste and adjust. The only way to know if your veggies will be flavorful enough is to taste them as you go.

If you are sautéing your veggies, just grab one out of the pan and give it a taste. If it is lacking flavor, add a bit more salt and seasoning.

If you are roasting your veggies, this is where things get a little weird. But stick with me. You are going to taste one of your seasoned but not cooked veggies. That's right. While it might sound strange, this is your one shot to gauge the seasoning level before it goes into the oven and onto the table. Taste and adjust as needed.

HACK 2: SEAR

For big flavor, we have to cook our veggies over HIGH heat.

High heat leads to caramelization which equals more flavorful veggies. We need to crank up the oven and dial up our stove top burners.

Oven roasted veggies: I recommend 425 degrees for oven roasted veggies.

Depending on the “denseness” of the veggies, they will cook at different rates. (Zucchini and bell peppers cook faster than chopped sweet potatoes) Check them every 20 minutes. You are looking for tender veggies with a good amount of caramelization.

Another trick? Don't stir or flip the vegetables halfway through. The veggies will stick less when you go to serve them and have the most imaginably perfect caramelization on one side instead of kinda okay caramelization on both sides. And we are going for the gold here!

Stove cooked veggies: Heat your pan over medium high heat before adding in oil or vegetables. Getting the pan warm first activates its nonstick properties and will keep you from losing half your hard work to the bottom of the pan.



Once the pan is warm, add in about 1 tablespoon of oil. Get that nice and warm too. By the time you add your veggies, you want to hear a nice sizzle. That is where the magic happens. Keep cooking, stirring occasionally until the veggies are tender and caramelized.

HACK 3: SAUCE

A good sauce saves the day!

If all else fails. If you forget to season. If your sear doesn't sear. If your veggies flop. We've always got sauce. And sauce can be a magical thing.

Good veggies love a good sauce, and bad veggies turn into good veggies with the right sauce.

There are two main types of sauce for our veggies.

“Serve with” sauces: This is the category of sauces that can save any veggie gone wrong. You cook your veggies and then serve this sauce over the top or as a dip.

Types of “serve with” sauce include:

- Hummus
- Aioli
- Salsa
- Hot sauce
- Dressings
- Balsamic Glaze

“Cook with” sauces: This category of sauce can be used as an extra flavor booster when cooking! I like to add it after the veggies are tender and caramelized. Add the sauce and cook just long enough to warm it through and bring out its flavor.

Types of “cook with” sauces:

- Teriyaki Sauce
- Barbecue Sauce



- Marinara sauce
- Pesto
- Curry

Here are my go-to veggie saving sauce recipes:

- Umami Sauce (cook with)
- Mexican Green Goddess (serve with)
- 10 Minute Green Garden Sauce (both!)
- Peanut Sauce (both!)
- Sriracha Cream Sauce (both!)
- Roasted Red Pepper Sauce (cook with)
- Habanero Pineapple Sauce (serve with)
- Herbed Yogurt Sauce (serve with)
- Tahini Ranch Dressing (serve with)
- Honey Sriracha Sauce (cook with)
- Pesto (both!)
- Smoky Paprika Aioli (serve with)
- Chipotle Aioli (serve with)
- Maple Tahini (serve with)
- Sweet and Sour Sauce (cook with)
- Spinach Artichoke Hummus (serve with)
- Sweet Potato Hummus (serve with)
- Thousand Island (serve with)
- Creamy Chipotle Sauce (both!)
- Cilantro Salsa Verde (both!)
- Blood Orange Avocado Salsa (serve with)



You are now equipped with everything you need to cook Darn Good Veggies! Go fourth and conquer dinner!

If you have any questions, reach out to me anytime at hello@darngoodveggies.com

And don't forget to tag your scrumptious vegetable recipes @DarnGoodVeggies and #DarnGoodVeggies on social media!