

# Poaching Fruit

Poaching is a form of cooking that lets you infuse lots of flavor into fruit by simmering it in liquid. Now to the fun part: You can use almost any type of liquid! What follows are some basic poaching liquids; note the ratios of wine/juice to water to sugar—when you scale the poaching liquid up or down, keep these ingredients in the same proportions. The wine- and juice-based poaching liquids are used for hard fruits, such as pears (see [Red Wine–Poached Pears](#)), apples, or quince. This amount of poaching liquid will be enough for 4 pieces of fruit that have been halved (a total of 8 halves). You can also poach soft fruits, but it takes a different method. See “Poaching Soft Fruit,” opposite page.

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## WINE POACHING LIQUID

For a red wine poaching liquid, add whole spices like cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, and cardamom pods. White wine poaching liquid is great with vanilla bean, but also spices such as whole cloves and cardamom pods.

**4 cups red or white wine**

**4 cups water**

**2 cups sugar**

In a medium saucepan, combine the wine, water, and sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat. Add the fruit of choice, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Take the fruit out of the hot liquid just when it begins to soften (this will vary with the type of fruit and its ripeness).

Discard any spices that were used. Transfer the poaching liquid to a bowl set in an ice bath (a larger bowl filled with ice and water). When the poaching liquid has cooled completely, return the fruit to it. Refrigerate and serve chilled. (The fruit will keep, covered, for up to 8 days in the refrigerator.)

To make a syrupy sauce out of the poaching liquid, transfer it to a small saucepan and simmer until it's reduced by half. Let the sauce to cool to room temperature before serving.

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## FRUIT JUICE POACHING LIQUID

Great with spices, depending on the fruit juice. Cinnamon sticks and nutmeg are great with apple juice, and I would use cardamom pods with pomegranate.

**5 cups fruit juice, such as orange, apple, or pomegranate**

**3 cups water**

**2 cups sugar**

In a medium saucepan, combine the fruit juice, water, and sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat. Add the fruit of choice, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Take the fruit out of the hot liquid just when it begins to soften (this will vary with the type of fruit and its ripeness).

Discard any spices that were used. Transfer the poaching liquid to a bowl set in an ice bath (a larger bowl filled with ice and water). When the poaching liquid has cooled completely, return the fruit to it. Refrigerate and serve chilled. (The fruit will keep, covered, for up to 8 days in the refrigerator.)

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## POACHING SOFT FRUIT

Soft fruits such as citrus, berries, peaches, and melon are poached in a simple syrup (equal parts water and sugar, boiled to dissolve the sugar). In this method the fruit is not cooked in the poaching liquid to soften it, because it's already soft. Instead, the warm (not hot) syrup is poured over the fruit. The fruit then sits in the syrup for at least 1 hour, but can keep in the refrigerator for up to 8 days. You can get creative with the simple syrup, too, by adding tea or spices, or even stirring in some liquor. I like to use a little Campari to flavor the syrup I pour over grapefruit segments.