

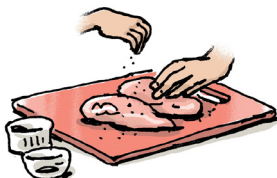
**You will need:** a medium frying pan; a metal spatula or tongs; a meat thermometer (optional); aluminum foil; olive oil; two boneless, skinless chicken breasts; salt and pepper (poured into small bowls so that you don't have to touch the containers after you've touched the raw chicken)

Step  
1



Pour enough olive oil into the frying pan to generously coat the bottom. Heat on the stovetop over medium heat until the oil shimmers, about three to four minutes.

Step  
2



While the oil heats up, generously season both sides of the chicken breasts with salt and pepper.

Step  
3



Carefully place the chicken breasts in the pan starting with one end closest to you to avoid splattering hot oil on yourself. Don't move the chicken around, because a nice golden-brown crust is forming.

Step  
4



After about six to seven minutes, flip the chicken using the metal spatula or tongs. (If the chicken sticks to the pan, it's not ready to be flipped yet. Wait about one more minute and then it should release, but don't force it.) Cook the second side for about six to seven minutes.

\*From the store to the kitchen to the table: We outline the steps that get you from raw ingredients to your dinner tonight, free of measurements and complicated techniques. It's a method you'll remember and whip out whenever you like. It is the most basic way to make the thing you're making.

Illustrations by Bill Russell. Find this online at [www.chow.com/stories/12089](http://www.chow.com/stories/12089).

Step  
5



Check the thickest part of the breasts with the meat thermometer—the chicken is ready when the temperature has reached 160 to 165 degrees Fahrenheit. If you don't have a meat thermometer, you can poke one of the breasts with a knife; if the juices run clear, the chicken is ready. If it's not ready, cook it one more minute on each side. (Larger breasts—for example, 10 ounces apiece—may take up to eight minutes per side.)

Step  
6



Remove the chicken to a plate or cutting board, tent it with foil, and let it rest for five minutes before serving.

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