

You will need: a three-quart baking dish; a large heatproof bowl; a large frying pan; half a stick of butter, plus more to coat the baking dish; a one-pound loaf of day-old bread; two onions; two apples; three celery stalks; fresh sage leaves; fresh thyme; chicken stock or broth; salt and pepper

Step
1

Heat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit (it will take at least 20 minutes to warm up) and arrange a rack in the middle. **Coat the baking dish with butter.**

Step
2

Slice the crust off the bread, **cut the loaf into 3/4-inch cubes**, and place the cubes in the bowl. Chop the onions, apples, and celery stalks into 1/2-inch pieces. Finely chop a **handful of sage** and the leaves from about **eight sprigs of thyme**.

Step
3

Melt the half stick of butter in the frying pan over medium-high heat until **foaming**. Add the onions and cook until they're **just starting to brown**, about five minutes. Add the apples, celery, and herbs and cook, stirring occasionally, **until the apples are tender** and easily pierced with a knife, about six minutes.

Step
4

Add about a cup of stock or broth and **bring the mixture to a simmer.**

*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.

Step
5



Turn the heat off and **add the vegetable-apple mixture** to the bread cubes. **Season** with two or three generous pinches of salt and a generous pinch of pepper, and **mix well**.

Step
6



Dump the bread mixture into the baking dish and bake until **the top of the stuffing just starts to brown**, about 30 to 40 minutes.

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Illustrations by Bill Russell. Find this online at www.chow.com/stories/11938.