

# TODAY'S MAIN INGREDIENT



## How to Make a Basic Vinaigrette

For the most basic vinaigrette, all you need is oil, vinegar (or citrus juice), and salt.

### BASIC VINAIGRETTE

Oil of your choice  
Vinegar or Citrus Juice  
Salt to taste

#### Optional Seasonings:

1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard (also helps to emulsify the vinaigrette)  
minced garlic or shallots, to taste  
freshly ground black pepper

**STEP 1** – Use a ratio of at least 2 parts oil to 1 part vinegar or citrus juice. Many people prefer a ratio of 3:1, and depending on the oil and the vinegar you use and the taste you want to achieve, you can go up to 4 parts oil to 1 part vinegar. Add seasonings. Experiment and taste, taste, taste. Among the most popular oils are olive oil and nut oils (note: refrigerate nut oils to prolong their life; they turn rancid more quickly than other oils). Experiment with different vinegars: red wine, white wine, white distilled, cider, and rice vinegar are popular; fancier (and more expensive) ones include champagne and sherry vinegars.

**STEP 2 – EMULSIFY:** *An emulsion is a mixture of oily and watery liquids. There are two kinds. The first is when oil or fat gets dispersed in water (such as salad dressing, mayonnaise, or milk). The second is when water gets dispersed into fat or oil (such as butter, margarine or chocolate).*

To emulsify oil and vinegar in a Mason jar, shake them until totally combined. This is the method Tannis Kowalchuk described in the podcast: “shake, shake, shake!”

#### **STEP 2** – continued

If you prefer to whisk in a bowl, remember to start with the vinegar and any other seasons, and then slowly whisk in the oil.

Taste as you go, testing for the right balance of oil to vinegar. Once you lose the balance to too much oil, it’s hard to regain the right balance.

Most vinaigrettes (with the exception of citrus, which lose their sparkling, fresh flavors after a few hours) can be made days ahead and refrigerated in an airtight container. If not using right away strain out any onion-garlic elements you may have used, so they don’t overpower the dressing; without them vinaigrette keeps for weeks. Citrus vinaigrettes go nicely not only with salad greens and crisp vegetables but also with beans, and grain salads.

#### A FINAL RULE ABOUT SALAD DRESSINGS:

**NEVER DRESS THE SALAD UNTIL YOU’RE READY TO EAT IT**