



How to Make Salad Dressing, from “Super Quick & Easy” to “Still Pretty Quick & Easy”



Making your own fresh & delicious salad dressing from scratch couldn't be simpler. There is kind of one basic formula upon which you can perform endless variations. That formula is:

FAT + ACID + SEASONING

- Fat = usually some kind of oil
- Acid = usually some type of vinegar or citrus
- Seasoning = salt, pepper, other spices, herbs, etc

If you want to get technical, adding some kind of [emulsifier](#) (many of the options below use one or more) will help the fat & acid play nicer together, but it's not strictly necessary. Some that work well in salad dressing include egg yolk, mustard, mayonnaise, honey, mashed avocado, miso, tahini, tomato paste, agave nectar, maple syrup...really anything a bit thick & pasty.

The simplest method is to start with 1:1 fat/acid, adjust to taste, then season however you like. Below are some of my go-to combinations, but the best thing about salad dressing is that it is endlessly customizable and there aren't too many ways to go wrong!

1. A++ best flavor-to-effort ratio for my money is equal parts extra virgin olive oil and lemon/lime juice + salt & pepper to taste. I shake it in & pour out of a jar if I am feeling like getting a jar out but sometimes just pour each over the whole salad, toss, & call it good. No one has ever complained about my not shaking it together ahead of time.
2. An easy variation - equal parts lemon/lime juice & EVOO, salt & pepper, + chili powder, cumin, cayenne, and/or sumac to taste. I love this on chopped veggie salads.
3. For slightly more effort - EVOO & lemon/lime juice, 1 small or 1/2 larger pressed or diced garlic clove, salt + pepper. Shake in a jar, whisk in the salad bowl before you throw the veggies in, or just dump it all over the top & toss.
4. If you want to get a little fancy & you're juicing a citrus anyway, consider zesting your lemon/lime first & throwing it in the dressing. Mega flavoring hack!

5. Any of the above, but replace citrus with literally any vinegar -- balsamic, white wine, champagne, apple cider, pineapple, banana, whatever you have & like. Or do 1/2 vinegar & 1/2 citrus. There is no way to go wrong!
6. A variation on 3) is EVOO, equal parts lemon juice & white wine or champagne vinegar, salt + pepper, then dice a shallot & dump it in. Shake shake shake & you're set! This is kind of our house dressing of which I almost always have a jar of sitting on the counter.
7. Have some fresh herbs (basil, cilantro, parsley, chives, thyme, oregano, tarragon, scallions, mint, etc)? Pick your favorites, chop them up, & throw them in. (My current fave combo is basil, cilantro, & chives.) OR OR OR just throw everything in a food processor or cuis & blast it for a bit. Everyone is always like MY GOD WHAT DID YOU DO TO THIS ARUGULA and I'm like MINT!
8. 1/3 cup-ish EVOO, dijon mustard, salt, & pepper to taste. Start with maybe a teaspoon of dijon & see if you prefer more. I like this with spinach.
9. I really like using apple cider vinegar in chopped veggie salads or summery salads with fruit. Mix EVOO & vinegar & add parm/pecorino & salt/pepper to taste. You can add a little honey if it seems too tart.
10. If I am making something with Asian flavors, sometimes I do 1/3 cup-ish sesame oil & 1/4 cup-ish yuzu or ponzu + sesame seeds for garnish. (Extra credit for toasting the sesame seeds.)
11. This one has more ingredients, but it's sooo good in a fall salad, so make yourself a big batch & just use it for weeks. 1/4 cup EVOO, 1/4 cup maple syrup (real not fake), 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar, 1 1/2 tsp dijon mustard, salt & pepper. Shake & pour.
12. For Caesar I do: 5 T EVOO, 2/3 cup mayo, 6 anchovy filets, 1 minced/pressed garlic clove, 2 tsp worcestershire, juice of 1 lemon, small onion or 2 shallots diced, parm to taste, salt & pepper to taste. Throw it in the food processor & you're done.

Congratulations, you are now a MASTER SALAD DRESSING MAKER!!!

