



from our kitchen

Tools We Love

The Foods staff spends a lot of time in the kitchen, both personally and professionally, so good tools are high on our must-have lists. Well-designed ones save time or at least simplify meal preparation. So when several Test Kitchens Professionals and Foods Editors sing the praises of a particular gadget, we all take notice. Here are a few that most of us have in our collections, along with some suggested uses.

We can't say this often enough: Among our favorite time-savers to come along in recent years are Microplane graters. Modeled on a woodworker's plane, these handy utensils shred everything from chocolate to soft cheese with ease. Before buying, consider what you'll be grating most.

The version with the smallest cutting holes makes short work of tedious kitchen tasks, such as grating citrus peel, garlic, and ginger. Most importantly, when you gently pull the grating edge across an orange, lemon, or lime, it scrapes off only the oil-rich rind without getting the bitter pith. Use the larger Microplane tools to grate chocolate for dusting desserts or pasteurized processed cheese for that veggie-plate standard, macaroni and cheese.

For added convenience, hold the Microplane grater over a flexible cutting board. These are downright cheap—you can buy them at a dollar store—and very versatile. Because they fold, you can easily shake the grated or chopped ingredient into a mixing bowl or pot. Place one over your regular cutting board for slicing meat; then put it in the dishwasher when you're done. That way, you can cut vegetables and raw meat for the same meal without fear of cross contamination. —DONNA FLORIO

