



General Questions on Broth

Question: If meat is acid-forming but minerals are alkaline-forming is bone broth acid-forming or alkaline-forming?

If meat is acid-forming but minerals are alkaline-forming is bone broth acid-forming or alkaline-forming? - Anonymous reader.

Answer: I don't buy the acid-alkali theory of nutrition. Many traditional peoples ate diets that would be predominantly acid-forming, yet still exhibited resoundingly beautiful health. I further remember hearing Sally Fallon Morell speak on traditional diets and, as an aside, she said she had her PH levels tested before and after meat consumption and they were the same. So this question might be better asked of someone specializing in acid-alkali diets. My guess is that broth would be alkaline as it's predominantly water with minerals and easy-to-assimilate proteins.

Question: What's the difference between stock, broth and bone broth?

I am wondering what is the difference between stock and broth? Are they the same thing? If I make a great broth using bones as you recommend, can I use that for all recipes that call for stock? Furthermore, can I write recipes that way? - Meghan.

Answer: Stock is traditionally made with bones and a small amount of meat adhering to the bones. Stocks are typically cooked for 3 to 4 hours. Broth is typically made with meat and may contain a small amount of bone in with the meat. Broth is typically cooked for 45 minutes to 2 hours. Bone broths are typically made with bones with a small amount of meat adhering to the bones, just like stocks, but are cooked for a much longer period of time - often in excess of 24 hours. You can read more about their differences in [Bone Broth 101](#).

You can use stocks, broths and bone broths interchangeable and you can write your recipes that way. From a culinary perspective, they perform more or less the same function in cooking.

Question: How do I make bullion?

You see products like "Better than Bullion" on the store shelves. . . how would I make something like that at home? - Svetlana

Answer: Those store bought bullions are terrible! Ack! So often they're loaded with garbage: refined salt, soy protein isolate. But making them at home is challenging. Traditionally, people made what they called "Portable Soup." Essentially, you make a stock with very little water and lots of bone, and boil it down to concentrate it. When it gelled, you scooped it out by the spoon and set it to dry. I'm currently working on a portable soup for Nourished Kitchen, so you'll see that tutorial soon.

Question: Is broth greasy?

Is all chicken broth from a roasted chicken greasy? – Meredith

Answer: No. Broth really shouldn't be greasy. I've noticed mine is more greasy if I haven't used a pasture-raised bird. When I have trouble accessing pasture-raised birds, I use organic "free-range" birds instead and they produce more grease than the truly pastured birds from my neighboring farmers. If your broth tastes greasy, transfer it to a mason jar and stick it in the fridge. The fat will rise to the top and solidify, then you can pick it off and use the resulting broth which should not be greasy at all.

Question: Can I use the liquid leftover from cooking a roast?

When you cook a roast or similar "hunk" of meat, either in the slowcooker or a dutch oven, do you keep the pan juices and fat that get left behind in the pot? – Monika

Answer: Yes. I often strain the residual liquid leftover from cooking a roast and add it to the stock pot or make a soup or sauce out of it. I usually let the fat solidify, pick it off and use it for cooking vegetables. Waste not, want not!

Question: What do you mean by "frame of a chicken?"

When you say "the frame of a roast chicken" what does that mean? Can I just buy a roast chicken and dump it in the slow cooker? – Peter

Answer: I mean chicken carcass. Chicken frame is synonymous with chicken carcass. You can use the frame of a roast chicken and dump it in the slowcooker - pull off the meat first or it will lose flavor after slowcooking.

Question: Does broth inhibit nutrient absorption?

I have learned the benefits of bone broth so I started making my own out of turkey carcasses or beef bones (with some meat left on them). So delicious and my children love it too! We eat broths probably 2 or 3 times a week. But today, I was told that some new studies have come out on broth and I should be careful not to eat too much of it 'cause it can inhibit the body from absorbing other important nutrients. The calcium and magnesium can get in the way. Now I'm confused. Would you be able to help me with this? All that I've read on broth has been very positive and beneficial. Would you be able to send me any articles on the cons of broth consumption?

Answer: I've looked and looked and cannot find any study that indicates any nutrients are inhibited by the consumption of broth. If you happen to get a hold of the actual studies, please forward them along to questions@nourishedkitchen.com. Nor have I found any information critical of broth consumption outside of vegetarian websites who are critical of broth because it is made from animals.

Questions on Gelling

Question: Why can't I get my broth to gel?

My broth doesn't always gel like everyone says it should. I know the bones are good and fresh etc (we raise our own animals!)... it still tastes great and the marrow is definitely gone - but why won't it gel? - Dana

What can I do to successfully get my broth to have more gelatin. – Amanda

Answer: Gel in a broth is a quirky thing and gelatin breaks comes together and breaks down almost on a whim! Too much water, too long a simmer, too rapid a boil will all break down gelatin (this is why [bone broth in a slow cooker](#) rarely gels, but is still good for you). Using minimal amounts of water, reducing cooking time and bringing the liquid to a quick boil (followed by turning it down to a slow simmer) usually helps gelling. Even if your broth isn't gelling, you're still getting loads of goodies - amino acids and minerals.

Question: Is stock that hasn't gelled less nutritious?

I simmer my stock for 24 hours and it only slightly gels. Does this mean it's less nutritious than a stock that does gel? - Lauri

Answer: Even if your stock doesn't gel it is still extraordinarily rich in minerals and amino acids. It still offers powerful nutrition. It doesn't have congealed gelatin (which breaks down easily), but it has loads of glycine, proline and other goodies. If you really want to make sure to add gelatin into your diet, you can always purchase gelatin from a [good source](#).

Questions on Perpetual Soup (Slow Cooker Bone Broth)

Question: My perpetual soup came out dark, why?

I made perpetual soup for the first time a couple of weeks ago. After the first couple of days, the broth was much darker than I am used to. I was using the broth and refilling the crock pot with water regularly, but it was still very dark. Is this normal for the perpetual soup? Also, do you let it chill and skim off the fat as recommended in NT, or do you leave the fat in? I've been leaving it in lately, and I was just curious about your perspective. – Todd

Answer: I haven't had this issue, though I know a few other readers did. My feeling is that your slowcooker might be running high or that the fat in the broth might be discoloring the broth. I typically use the broth as is, fat intact; however, I find that when I'm using an organic bird (as opposed to pasture-raised), it produces a lot more fat which can give the stock a slick, unappealing mouthfeel. In that case, I strain the broth from the slowcooker into a mason jar and chill it in the fridge, then remove the fat (saving it for cooking) and warm up the broth before consuming it. This hasn't been an issue for me with pasture-raised birds, just the organic ones I buy when I can't get pasture-raised.

Question: How much water do you add to perpetual soup on the first day?

I was just wondering how much water you put in to begin [this soup](#). I see that you use about 2-3 quarts per day but just didn't know if you start with 6 quarts of water. - Edris.

Answer: I don't measure the initial amount of water I add to perpetual soup. I just fill the slow cooker with chicken, vegetable scraps and seasonings, then I add filtered water to cover.

Question: Can I make beef stock using the perpetual soup method?

Can I make the beef stock as a perpetual stock too, or just chicken? – Jerilea

Answer: I've never tried it. If someone has, please let us know. Theoretically, though, there's no reason why it wouldn't work.

Question: My perpetual soup tastes rancid, what happened?

We made perpetual broth for the first time last week. First few days were good, at 1week, tasted rancid. We did use a roasted chicken so meat was still on the bones. Could the meat have caused it? – Tammy

Answer: The broth from a long-simmered perpetual soup can start to lose its flavor after about one week. I think the flavor peaks at day #5. It's fine for the meat to still be on the bones, but I usually remove it after 24 hours. Rancid flavor usually comes from fat, and if the broth wasn't removed often, the fat can accumulate on top of the broth resulting in an off-flavor, especially after seven days. I recommend changing the chicken frame on day #7 and starting with a new frame.

Question: My perpetual soup boiled continuously?

I made the perpetual soup and kept the slow cooker on low, however it boiled continuously even on low, is that what is meant to happen? – Joanne

Answer: The broth should be kept at a slow simmer, not a rapid boil. If you find your broth is boiling, your slow cooker might have an issue with temperature regulation which is not uncommon in older models.

Questions on Making Stock

Question: Can I use a pressure cooker for making stock?

Will you please comment on using a pressure cooker vs. the recommended simmering method described on your site? What effects in final product quality (health, presentation) differ in the two methods? – Susan

Answer: I don't recommend using pressure cookers. Many readers do make stock in pressure cookers, but I avoid them in favor for long and slow food preparation. High pressure and heat attained in pressure cookers may denature proteins in our food, and pressure-cooking isn't, typically, a traditional method of food preparation.

Question: Can I roast the bones to improve the flavor of stock?

Can you roast the bones for a bit to give it more flavor or does that lessen the quality of the broth? – Gail

Answer: I always recommend roasting the bones before making stock. The only exception to this would be a [fresh chicken broth](#), [chicken foot stock](#) or a roast chicken broth (in which case the bones are already roasted). Making stock or broth from bones that haven't been roasted can lend an acrid and bitter undertone to the bone broth.

Question: Why do we roast bones?

Why do we roast the bones of beef stock first but not poultry? Can I toss all the bones from steaks, etc into the freezer to make into stock later? (Or does it have to be bigger bones?) – Elisabeth

Answer: I do roast poultry bones because it improves the flavor. Chicken bones don't need to be roasted like beef bones because they produce a lighter flavor, but I do it anyway. Beef bones, if not roasted, can produce a weird bitter undertone to stocks and bone broths. I do save all my bones from cooking (steaks, roasts) in a freezer bag for making bone broth. I use them with marrow bones, neck bones and any other odd bones I might have.

Question: Should I continue to add water to my stock as it boils down?

When making a 24 hr bone broth (on stove), I always question whether or not I should continue to add water as the stock boils down. – Janet

Answer: Yes. I do. But you can help to reduce the amount it boils down, but keeping it at a slow simmer and keeping it covered. Keep in mind, though, that the less concentrated your stock is, the less likely it is to gel.

Question: Can I make broth from pork bones?

Why don't you ever hear about people making pork broth? Is it ever done, or is there a reason it shouldn't be? – Jessica

Answer: Yes. I don't do it because I don't have a reliable source of pork bones, aside from the occasional ham hock. All bones can work for broth. Pork broth goes especially well with beans, lentils and greens.

Question: Can I add an acid to my bones?

What's your opinion on adding an acid to broth as it cooks? – Melanie

Answer: Adding an acid, like wine or vinegar, is a great way to help minerals leach from the bones and into the liquid. It's not always necessary, though - for super long-simmered broths (like slow cooker broth), it doesn't do much. Also, if the bones are from a very young animal, they might not need the addition of an acid either.

Question: How long do I have to boil bones to derive benefit?

I'm curious how long you need to boil the bones minimally to get the benefits from it. I use vinegar in my broth- but I've heard of folks boiling for several days to 24 hours.. I find when I boil my bones for a long time the broth gets cloudy. – Laura

Answer: Stocks can be simmered for about 4 hours at a minimum, broths for 45 minutes at a minimum - and you will still derive benefits. To derive greater benefits, you need to simmer for at least 24 hours. You can resolve a cloudy broth by beating egg whites, pouring them into the broth and simmering for about thirty minutes to an hour. Skim off the eggs or strain it and your broth should be clearer.

Question: Long-simmered broth is unappealing, what can I do?

My husband doesn't like the taste of bone broth when it has simmered for a long time, but I really want to get him the benefits of it. What is the best way to do this? – Jesse

Answer: I'd simmer it for less time and make a stock instead - stocks still have many of the benefits of bone broths; they're just not cooked as long. For long-simmered broth, use it in recipes where its flavor can be disguised - braising vegetables or meat, cooking grains etc.

Question: How many times can we reuse the bones?

Some people say you can reuse your bones 5-6x But in the [Nourishing Traditions](#) books they say up to 24 hours for poultry and up to 72 hours for beef. Why do some people say you can use them more? I have tried this and am not convinced cooking them longer is a good idea. How do we know there are still health benefits from bones cooked 5-6x? - Michelle

Answer: [Nourishing Traditions](#) provides sample recipes, not hard-and-fast rules. There's many paths that lead to the same result, and, when I cook my broths on the stove I usually do limit time to 24 hours for poultry and 72 hours for beef. It's just easier that way; however, I also make a lot of stock in the slowcooker and that continues to cook for a solid week. If what you're doing works, keep at it. In terms of which is more nutritious - you'd have to have to different broths tested for a definite answer. I don't think anyone has done that yet.

Question: Can I use conventionally raised animal bones in my broth?

Is it ok that we are using regular turkey, ham, etc bones? we haven't had the funds to change over to pastured chickens, etc. yet. – Melinda

Answer: Yes. If money's tight or lack of access means that you have to choose between broth made from conventional bones or no broth at all, I'd go with conventional - saving money to make the change over to grass-fed/pasture-raised as soon as is feasible. The bones will perform the same, regardless of origin; however, you need to be aware that you will be consuming residual hormones, antibiotics and GMO proteins when you're using the bones and meat of conventionally raised animals.

Question: How do I use chicken feet to make stock?

How do I prepare chicken feet for making stock - or do I just throw them right in with the chicken frame? - Melanie.

Answer: I chop off the talons and peel the thin membrane that surrounds the feet ([learn more here](#)). Not everyone does, but I find the stock is improved when I clean them up like that first.

Question: Can I make broth without a slow cooker?

Is there a good way to make bone broth without a crockpot? – Elyse

Answer: Yes. Try [fresh chicken broth](#), [roast chicken stock](#) or [homemade beef stock](#).

Question: What kind of chicken should I use?

I have a question about the type of chicken carcass to use. It's really hard around here to find chicken that isn't fed soy and corn—even one's that are supposedly free range, with no antibiotics or hormones. Do you know if that's as much an issue with using the bones? There are lots of "free range" chicken people around here, (I live in Southern Ontario), and they do supplement with flax, but then they use pellets as well. The chicken people that I've found that do truly pastured chicken raise limited numbers, and everyone seems to be sold out right now. Any advice? Also, what's your take on doing beef broth instead? Is chicken just a preference in your family? I have grass fed soup and marrow bones. – Meghan

Answer: I follow a principle of good-better-best. That is, I go for pasture-raised local chicken that has never been fed soy or corn first. If that's unavailable, I go for pasture-raised chicken fed on non-gmo feed (which might include soy or corn). If that's unavailable, I go for pasture-raised chicken fed on GMO feed. If that's unavailable, I go for organic "free-range" chicken. US law (I'm unsure about Canada), disallows the use of hormones in chicken, so that's not an issue. Antibiotics is, but you do what you can. Beef broth is awesome stuff, it just has a different flavor than chicken so it's paired with different veggies and in different dishes.

Questions on Fat in Broth

Question: Can I use the fat that congeals on my broth?

So...do I want to keep or find a way of disposing of the fat in the broth? – Diane

Answer: Some cooks keep the fat in the stock and use it as is. Most of us would probably find the oily and slick texture unappealing, though. You can chill the broth in the fridge. The fat will rise to the top and harden, it can then be scooped out and saved to use for sauteing or cooking.

Question: Is chicken fat too high in PUFAs to keep after broth making?

I recently read on Mark's Daily Apple that chicken fat is high in PUFAs and that the fat should be discarded after cooking a 24 hour bone broth. I have been using the fat for several years and this is the first time I have heard this. What is your position on this? – Jen

Answer: Chicken fat is not particularly high in polyunsaturated fatty acids. About 45% of chicken fat is comprised of monounsaturated fatty acids, 30% is saturated fat and the remaining 25% is polyunsaturated fats (in a pastured bird, this is fairly evenly split between omega-3 fatty acids and omega-6 fatty acids). Polyunsaturated fats are heat-sensitive; however, I don't perceive this to be a significant problem in chicken broth. One cup of homemade chicken stock will contain about 1/2 gram of polyunsaturated fat - not a whole lot. Further, you should consider that traditional peoples ate everything with very little waste and I doubt that chicken fat from broth making would have gone to waste either. If you eat an otherwise nutrient-dense diet, a little bit of long-cooked polyunsaturated fatty acids in chicken broth is not a big deal (we need to learn to chill out a bit about our diets). If you're still concerned, you can always discard the fat. I don't think it'll make even a nominal difference.

Questions on Using Broth

Question: How do I use beef broth?

How do I use beef broth? - Diane.

Answer: Use beef broth on its own, in rich vegetable soups (it pairs nicely with roasted vegetables, beets and tomatoes). Use it in recipes like [Salisbury Steak](#) or [Brisket with Tzimmes](#). You can reduce it, swirl in some butter and create a reduction sauce or you can use it to make brown gravy.

Question: What are ways I can use broth?

I need more ideas on ways to use my stocks. I have so many in the freezer right now. I don't care for gravy. Usually I use stock for making soup and cooking rice, and that's about it. – Annie

Answer: I drink stock plain - or seasoned with salt, pepper, parsley, garlic and sometimes ginger. I use it as a base for soups, stews and sauces. I use it in braising meats and vegetables as well as cooking grains (when/if we eat them, which isn't often). You can get some recipes on [Bone Broth 101](#).

Question: When should I add salt to my broth or stock?

Also, should salt be added at this point [when simmering] or should it be added later when you're actually using the stock in something? – Lauri

Answer: I never salt my broth until I'm preparing the final dish, that way it can be seasoned to taste.