

Poached Eggs

45

Serves 2

EQUIPMENT

deep-frying pan (at least 5cm/2in) with a solid base but not too heavy, ramekin or small cup, slotted spoon

INGREDIENTS

4 of the freshest free-range eggs you can find (the best you can afford please!)

100ml (3½fl oz) white vinegar

sea salt flakes, freshly ground black pepper and gorgeous golden toast to serve

METHOD

Have all equipment out and ingredients ready. I also suggest the table is set or the plates are ready and waiting. If this is your first try, have someone else on toasting duties too!

Fill your pan about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Add the vinegar.

Have a large deep bowl of warm water ready to pop the cooked poached eggs into. This is optional but I find this works well for me.

Heat the water over a medium heat. It's ready when there is a little steam and several bubbles appearing, but not boiling.

Crack an egg into the ramekin or cup. Stir the water to get a good whirlpool going and pop in the egg by bringing the ramekin down really close to the steaming water and sliding the egg in—be brave. The egg will turn and seal in a little neat package. Repeat with another egg, gently stirring the water in a small section of the pan and sliding the egg from the ramekin into the whirlpool.

Once white is set (about 3 minutes), remove the egg carefully with a slotted spoon and place into the bowl of water or lightly drain on the spoon and carefully place straight onto the hot, buttered toast.

For restaurant quality use a pair of kitchen scissors to trim away any egg strands to make a perfect round egg.

What went wrong

- Using old, stale eggs. Super fresh is the key! It will also help so much to have good quality eggs—the best you can afford.
- Not enough water or too many bubbles in the pan!
- The wrong pan? If it's too shallow, there won't be enough water for your eggs to float. A pan that's too deep will make it hard to get your eggs in and out.
- Not stirring the water.
- Overcrowding the pan—four eggs at a time is really the absolute maximum. When starting out try one at a time.

