



► Okay, Salt Isn't Always the Answer

While it's true that the way a little NaCl wakes up food is pretty miraculous, it isn't the only thing that a dish needs to shine. Acid (i.e., citrus or vinegar) and heat (from raw alliums or chiles) are also key, which is why we season in stages—some salt, then some lemon, then some chile—until everything comes into brilliant focus.

Like your desserts extra-salted? Just keep adding more and tasting the butterscotch until you reach your personal sweet-salty threshold.

3

Season from the Start

Ready for your new kitchen mantra? Here it is: Always Be Seasoning. That means adding a good pinch of salt at every stage of cooking—not just at the very end. This ensures that your finished dish is as flavorful as possible, both because each element has been seasoned and because salt draws taste-diluting water out of foods and into the pan to be cooked off.



SALT BOOT CAMP

PROPERLY SALTED PASTA

- Kosher salt
- ½ cup olive oil, plus more
- 3 large shallots, chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, plus more
- 2 small bunches broccolini, stems cut into ½" pieces, florets cut into bite-size pieces
- 12 oz. tubetti or other short tube pasta
- 1½ oz. Parmesan, finely grated, plus more
- Lemon wedges (for serving)

The combination of salty water and salty Parmesan puts this pasta at risk of becoming oversalted. If that happens, throw in a knob of unsalted butter at the end to mellow it and add a smooth finish.

1

Bring 6 quarts water to a boil in a large pot and season with kosher salt. The water should taste like the ocean; this'll take about ¼ cup salt.

2

Meanwhile, heat ½ cup oil in a large skillet over medium. Add shallots, garlic, and ½ tsp. red pepper flakes; season with a medium pinch of salt, about ¼ tsp. (just under 1 g) Diamond Crystal. Cook, stirring occasionally,

until shallots are translucent, about 4 minutes; remove from heat.

3

Cook broccolini in boiling water 1 minute, then use a slotted spoon to transfer to skillet with shallot mixture. Return water to a boil. Cook pasta, stirring occasionally, until very al dente, 7–9 minutes.

4

Drain, reserving ¼ cup pasta cooking liquid. Add pasta and

cooking liquid to skillet; toss to combine. Cook over medium-high heat, gradually adding 1½ oz. Parmesan and tossing often, until cheese is melted and a thick, glossy sauce forms, about 4 minutes. You're adding quite a bit of salt via the water and the cheese, so do a taste check. If needed, add more salt a small pinch at a time. Squeeze lemon wedges over pasta and drizzle with oil. Top with more Parm and red pepper flakes.



SALT CAN ALSO... BE ITS OWN FLAVOR

We all know that salt, when used in just the right amount, enhances the taste of other ingredients. But add just a little more and it becomes a flavor all its own.

SALTED BUTTERSCOTCH

Cook 1 cup (lightly packed) dark brown sugar, 1 cup heavy cream, ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, ¼ cup Scotch, 2 Tbsp. light corn syrup, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, and ¼ cup water in a large saucepan over low heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to medium and bring to a boil (without stirring). Cook, swirling often, until sauce is thick enough to coat spoon, 8–10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in 1½ tsp. flaky sea salt.
DO AHEAD: Sauce can be made 1 week ahead. Cover and chill. Reheat gently before using. Makes about 2 cups