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CLEVER KITCHEN GADGETS MAKE KNOCKING UP HEALTHY MEALS EASY, WRITES VANESSA SCHULDIT

Are you finding it hard to commit to healthy eating? Could it be that the equipment in your kitchen is letting you down? It's time to make way for these 10 stylish must-have gadgets, which deserve a rightful place in every healthy kitchen.



#### ◀ Fresh herb storage

Herbs are bursting with flavour and are a healthy seasoning alternative to salt. Rich in antioxidants and other health-promoting properties, herbs act to ward off a range of diseases. Fresh herbs can be stored in the fridge with their stems in a glass of water and a plastic bag over the top, or use a specially designed storage container. **STAR PICK** *Prepara Herb-Savor*, \$59.95. The life of your fresh herbs will be prolonged by up to three weeks with this clever container that has a water well to irrigate your herbs. Best of all, it fits neatly in your refrigerator door.

### ◀ Metric spoons and measuring cups

Rest easy knowing that the kilojoule count of your recipes is maintained when you measure out all ingredients with metric cups and spoons. Just be sure to get a set of Australian Standard measuring cups and spoons where one tablespoon is 20ml, and not 15ml as used in the US.

**STAR PICK** Décor Cook measuring cups, \$4.94, and spoons (pictured), \$2.94.

The measures on these dishwasher-safe cups and spoons are super-easy to see without straining your eyes, with metric graduations to Australian Standards. They're also all free from BPA, PVA, lead and phthalates.



### ▲ Non-stick skillet

Non-stick surfaces equate to having to use less oil, which means kilojoule savings. Lean meats, vegetables, eggs and wholemeal pancakes can be cooked in a jiffy in a non-stick skillet without the need for oil, or only a little oil spray.

**STAR PICK** Circulon Infinite French Skillet, 28cm, \$209.95. This hard-anodised, non-stick skillet has been tested to outlast all other non-sticks. It can be used on any cooktop, is oven safe to 240°C and dishwasher safe.



### ▲ Herb scissors

Ditch the salt and snip some herbs to add life to your meals. Owning a pair of herb scissors will have you wanting to sneak some health-promoting herbs into every meal. One snip and you'll be hooked.

**STAR PICK** Cuisena Herb Scissors, \$9.95. The three-piece, stainless steel micro-serrated blades shred herbs faster and easier than a knife and chopping board.



### ◀ Fat separator

Gravy and sauce fat separators allow you to enjoy your favourite home-made gravy and sauce without those undesirable heart-clogging fats. These clever jugs separate the fatty part of your gravy or sauce to deliver full flavour, minus the guilt.

**STAR PICK** Cuisipro Deluxe Fat Separator, \$29.95. Lean gravy is simple with this one-litre capacity fat separator. It features a unique plug which blocks fat out of the spout until the fat and gravy have separated. It's also dishwasher safe. ▶

### ▼ Egg poacher

Egg lovers can rejoice as the Heart Foundation says it's fine to enjoy up to six eggs each week, as part of a healthy balanced diet that's low in saturated fat. Poaching gets the thumbs up as a cooking method, so having a poacher on hand is a great way to add some protein-rich eggs to your diet to promote satiety and help keep hunger pangs at bay.

**STAR PICK Fusion Brands Poachpod, \$19.95 (for a pair).** They're up to the challenge being heat resistant to 350°C. This silicone cooking tool cocoons your egg and floats on boiling water. Being non-stick, the perfectly formed dome-shaped egg can simply be flipped out onto warm wholemeal toast when ready.



### ◀ Steamer

Steaming is a gold standard cooking method to retain nutrients in food. Many vitamins found in vegetables, like vitamin C and the B-group vitamins, are sensitive to heat and tend to leach out when submerged in water. Steaming uses minimal amounts of water and it's a relatively quick method of cooking, exposing food to heat for just a short time.

**STAR PICK Tefal VitaCuisine Compact food steamer, \$139.95.** This ultra-compact steaming gem has a 10-litre food capacity and a 'Vitamin Plus' booster button that allows you to cook your food even faster, which helps retain up to 50 per cent more vitamins than traditional cooking methods.



### ▶ Oil dispenser

Adding a little polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oil to your meals adds flavour and good fats to your diet. Hand pouring oil from a bottle is tricky when you want just a little. An oil dispenser is the perfect solution to adding a drizzle of oil to your grilled fish, lean meats, salads and vegetables.

**STAR PICK Prepara Tabletop Mister, \$34.95.** The Oil Mister holds 100ml of oil and it has a clog-free filter that allows you to infuse your oil by filling the mister with herbs, spices and citrus peels. It produces flavour bliss without blowing your kilojoule count out of the water.





### ▲ Digital kitchen scales

Using digital kitchen scales to weigh your food portions provides a reality check on how much you're eating. Knowing your usual portions allows you to reduce serving sizes and shave off surplus kilojoules. And making use of kitchen scales to accurately weigh out ingredients in healthy recipes is a sure way to keep on track with your dietary goals.

**STAR PICK Salter Nutri-Weigh Slim Electronic Kitchen Scale, \$169.95 (pictured).** This digital scale not only weighs your food in 1g increments up to 5kg, it also calculates its nutritional value based on a database of over 900 foods. It provides information on the calories, protein, carbohydrate, fat, cholesterol, fibre and sodium in your food, and a memory function lets you tally nutritional values at the end of the day or week, or any time in between. **Multipoint Technologies Electronic Diet/Kitchen Scale, \$72.** This scale also has a 5kg weighing capacity in 1g increments. It displays nutritional values (both kilojoules and calories, protein, carbs, fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium) for over 500 food items.

### ▼ Wok

The method of stir-fry wok cooking, with ingredients briskly tossed just a few minutes over a high heat, helps retain nutrients in your food. This is especially true for stir-fried vegetables that still have plenty of crunch. Best of all, wok cooking only requires a dash of oil, or no oil in the case of non-stick surfaces, to help keep the kilojoule count low.

**STAR PICK Tefal Jamie Oliver 32cm Hard Anodised Wok with Lid, \$299.95.** This little beauty combines a non-stick surface with super durable hard-anodised aluminium construction. A unique ThermoSpot heat indicator fades to let you know when the wok is preheated to the perfect cooking temperature. ◊



**STOCKISTS** Cuisena, (02) 8884 6000 | Cuisipro, [www.zimba.com.au](http://www.zimba.com.au) | Circulon, [www.circulon.com.au](http://www.circulon.com.au) | Décor, [www.decor.com.au](http://www.decor.com.au) | Fusion, [www.zimba.com.au](http://www.zimba.com.au) | Multipoint Technologies, [www.multipointtechnologies.com.au](http://www.multipointtechnologies.com.au) | Prepara, 1800 209 999 | Salter, [www.salter.com.au](http://www.salter.com.au) | Tefal, [www.tefal.com.au](http://www.tefal.com.au)