

Basic Kale (“Greens Glorious Greens” Johnna Albi & Catherine Walthers)

Once you’ve mastered this basic recipe, you are all set to serve kale as is or to use it in many delicious recipes. After conducting numerous tests, we find that this method results in the best-tasting kale: sweet, slightly al dente texture, and earthy flavor. Of great importance is the size of the pan in which the kale is cooked. For a large bunch of kale, use a 10-12 inch skillet that has a tight-fitting lid. The advantages are that the water returns to a boil quickly and the kale can be spread out evenly. This ensures that the kale cooks properly in the required amount of time.

Serves 2-3

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb kale

2 cups water

pinch of sea salt

Fill a large bowl with cold water. Plunge in the kale and swish it around to loosen any dirt or sand. If you notice that there are any gray-green aphids on the kale, add a big pinch of salt to the water and swish again. Any dirt or sand should sink to the bottom and the aphids should come off. They are usually on the underside of the leaves. Check carefully.

Lift kale out of the water. If the water is dirty or there is sand on the bottom of the bowl, dump the water out, rinse the bowl, and repeat the process.

Use one hand to hold the stalk of an individual leaf, rib side up. Use the other hand to strip the leaf off the stalk with one quick motion. Discard or compost the stalks if tough. If stalks are tender, you can chop them and use them.

Chop or tear kale into bite-size pieces. Set aside.

Bring the water to a boil in a large skillet that has a tight-fitting lid. Add the prepared kale, return water to a boil, cover, and cook over high heat for 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until kale is tender. Take care that all the liquid doesn’t evaporate. Season to taste with salt if desired.

Remove kale from the skillet with a slotted spoon. Cool in cold water if desired to stop cooking, or use immediately in your favorite recipe. Drink any remaining “pot likker” as a tonic!

Variations:

Saute 2 minced garlic cloves in 2 tsp olive oil, add cooked kale, and a pinch of salt, and heat through.

Drizzle cooked kale with olive oil and fresh lemon juice.

Drizzle cooked kale with toasted sesame oil, toasted sesame seeds, and a pinch of salt.

Use as a bed for grilled fish or chicken.