Random Taco Cookbook



# Credits

(who took the picture?)  
(what website did the pic come from)  
(who wrote the code?)

# Basic Shredded Chicken with Quick and Dirty Spice Mix, Corn Salad and Pickled Red Onions in Fresh Corn Tortillas

#### Basic Shredded Chicken

Basic Shredded Chicken  
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This recipe creates enough shredded chicken for 2 to 3 meals. It's a savory, universal base; once cooked, you can supplement with any number of spices or treatments to make tacos, taquitos, soups, enchiladas ... even Italian or Indian applications if you like.  
  
\_\_In the Crockpot\_\_  
  
\* 4-5 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breast  
\* 1 can chicken broth  
\* 1 tsp chili powder  
\* 1/2 tsp cumin  
\* 1/2 tsp garlic powder  
\* 1/2 tsp oregano  
\* kosher salt  
\* black pepper  
  
Salt the chicken breasts (be reasonably generous here), then crack some black pepper over each. In your crockpot, mix garlic powder, chili powder, cumin and oregano into the broth. Place chicken in crockpot, then cook on low for 8 hours.  
  
When the chicken is done, attack each piece with two forks to shred. Do this on a Sunday and you'll have an easy time putting together meals throughout the week.  
  
I often give this a quick simmer with a bit of water and [universal taco seasoning](/seasonings/universal\_taco\_seasoning.md) for taco filling. Or throw it into tortilla soup. Or make some sweet [taquitos](/like\_tacos/baked\_taquitos.md). Or just add some barbecue sauce to a handful of chicken, and toss it onto a soft roll for a quick sandwich. Man \*can\* live on tacos alone, but one doesn't have to.

#### Quick and Dirty Spice Mix

Quick and Dirty Spice Mix  
=========================  
  
I’m not going to make a lot of big assumptions here. You own a skillet of some sort. You have some jars of jankity-ass spices from who-knows-when. You want to eat some tacos within the next, like, fifteen minutes. I got you covered, bachelor(ette).  
  
\* 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour  
\* 2 1/2 tsp. chili powder  
\* 3/4 tsp. onion powder (or 1 1/2 tsp. minced yellow onion)  
\* 1 1/4 tsp. salt  
\* 1 tsp. paprika  
\* 3/4 tsp beef bouillon powder  
\* 1/4 tsp. granulated sugar  
\* 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper  
\* 1/4 tsp. garlic powder  
\* 1 tsp. cumin  
  
Put all this in something with a lid, add 3/4 cup of water, and shake it. Brown a pound of ground beef, then pour the whole situation in there. Stir. Cook it down until it looks like you only put in half a cup of water. You have tacos now.  
  
Vegetarians  
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I’ve made this with that soy protein “ground beef” and it does not \_surprisingly\_ taste like someone put spices on a stack of cheap bar coasters and ran it all through a blender. (Vegetable) oil the skillet when you’re dealing with that stuff, unless you’re looking for excuses to buy a new one.  
  
If you leave out the bouillon for the sake of doing things vegan-style you’ll probably want to nudge up the salt a little.

#### Corn Salad

Corn Salad  
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\* 2 Ears of corn  
\* 1 Lime, juiced  
\* Small handful of Cilantro, chopped  
\* A few green onions, chopped  
\* Garlic salt, or Garlic AND salt. I use Trader Joe's Garlic Salt in the grinder usually.   
  
Cut the corn off of the cob, and in a mixing bowl mix together corn, lime juice, chopped cilantro and garlic salt. You can tweak any of this stuff as desired.  
  
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This is my first Github commit. I'm glad it's taco related.

#### Pickled Red Onions

Pickled Red Onions  
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My wife made this recipe up, after eating something similar, but if you are making brisket tacos, it is the most wonderful accessory:  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* Vinegar  
\* 2 chopped red onions  
\* 1 tablespoon of sugar  
\* a dash of chili powder  
  
Chop the red onions into rings and put them into a container of vinegar. Add the sugar and store the mixture in your refrigerator to marinate and pickle, the longer the better.  
  
Pick out the rings and place them on your brisket taco. Eat.  
  
Variations  
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Pickled onions are a favorite in the Von Doom house, too. [@littlewhirl](http://twitter.com/littlewhirl) played around with a similar starting point and we use this brine instead:  
   
\* 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar  
\* 1 T Sugar (I usually use coconut palm sugar because I'm a hippie I guess)  
\* Water  
\* 1 1/2 tsp salt  
\* 1 sprig fresh oregano and/or cilantro (optional)  
  
Slice 1 red onion on a mandolin (WORTH IT). In a bowl melt the sugar and salt with some warm/hot water. Add vinegar and 1c of filtered water.  
Add in onion, top off w/ water so that the onion is just covered.   
VERY IMPORTANT: Let sit at room temp for at least an hour. Trust me.   
  
The apple cider vinegar is a tangier but also more subtle, keeping more of the onion flavor there. And using a partial salt water brine lets it work nice for quick pickles, but also for slightly longer engagements. Leading to the most important aspect:   
  
PICKLE ALL THE THINGS  
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Seriously. All the things. Pickle your fridge. Pickle your waffles. Make. Lots. Of. Pickles.   
  
\* \_\_Cabbage\_\_ — red or green work. You only need an hour or so (like onions)  
\* \_\_Jalepeños\_\_ — seriously GTFO these are good. Add dill for a twist. Add parboiled carrots if you want to cut the spice  
\* \_\_Greenbeans\_\_ — because greenbeans are goddam delicious  
\* \_\_Toy cars — kid with an attitude? Pickle their favorite toy car. Let's see them try to cop a tude when their matchbox cars are soggy and briney  
\* \_\_Cauliflower\_\_ — personal favorite. Pickles in an hour, super delicious  
\* \_\_Baby corn\_\_ — baby corn is gross, but if you pickle it you can make jokes about how big all the other things you pickled are

#### Fresh Corn Tortillas

Fresh Corn Tortillas  
===================  
  
This is the only way to go. So worth it. Makes roughly 15 tortillas.  
  
\* 1 3/4 cups masa harina  
\* 1 1/8 cups water  
  
1. In a medium bowl, mix together masa harina and hot water until thoroughly combined. Turn dough onto a clean surface and knead until pliable and smooth. If dough is too sticky, add more masa harina; if it begins to dry out, sprinkle with water. Cover dough tightly with plastic wrap and allow to stand for 30 minutes.  
2. Preheat a cast iron skillet or griddle to medium-high.  
3. Divide dough into 15 equal-size balls. Using a tortilla press, a rolling pin, press each ball of dough flat between two sheets of wax paper.  
4. Place tortilla in preheated pan and allow to cook for approximately 30 seconds, or until browned and slightly puffy. Turn tortilla over to brown on second side for approximately 30 seconds more, then transfer to a plate. Repeat process with each ball of dough. Keep tortillas covered with a towel to stay warm and moist (or a low temp oven) until ready to serve.

# Ground Beef (Traditional; US) with Quick and Dirty Spice Mix, Traditional Taco Mixins and Chipotlé Sauce in Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

#### Ground Beef (Traditional; US)

Ground Beef (Traditional; US)  
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The tranditional base for an American taco is ground beef, browsed in a skillet and seasoned.  
  
\* 1lb Ground Beef  
  
1. Heat a skillet on the stovetop.  
2. Brown the ground beef for 8-10 minutes, or until it is thoroughly cooked, stirring frequently to avoid sticking or burning. (If you're not using a non-stick pan, which is preferred, use 1T oil to keep things loose.)  
3. Stir in seasonings.

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#### Traditional Taco Mixins

Traditional Taco Mixins  
(makes about 20 servings)  
  
- 1 (16 ounce) container sour cream  
- 1/4 head iceberg lettuce (rinsed, dried, shredded)  
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
- 3 diced tomatoes  
- 1 (2.25 ounce) can black olives, drained  
  
Add ingredients to tacos in layers.

#### Chipotlé Sauce

Chipotlé Sauce  
==============  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* 1 cup plain Greek yogurt  
\* Juice from 2 limes  
\* 2-3 chipotlé peppers, with surrounding adobo sauce from can  
  
\_\_Directions\_\_  
  
1. Drop all of this into a food processor, and blend away.  
2. Let sit in fridge for 30 minutes or overnight for flavor melding.   
3. Add to tacos, and anything else you'd like.

#### Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)

Hard Corn Shells (Traditional; US)  
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Mistakenly thought by many to be traditionally Mexican, hard shells were actually popularized in the US in the mid-20th century.  
  
While they can certainly be made at home (if you have access to a deep-fryer), the best method of obtaining hard taco shells is to head to the grocery store.

# Swiss Chard with Universal Taco Seasoning, Drunken Green Beans and Black Olives in Fresh Corn Tortillas

#### Swiss Chard

Swiss Chard  
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This is actually a Rick Bayless recipe from his cookbook \_Mexican Everyday\_, but we've used it a fair amount on those days we feel like not eating meat but still want to have tacos.  
  
\_\_Ingredients\_\_  
  
\* 1 bunch swiss or rainbow chard. Could also do spinach I guess. Probably not good with kale.  
\* 1 onion sliced thin  
\* 1/2 cup of chicken or vegetable broth  
  
Slice up the chard into small slices. In a large skillet, heat the oil on medium-high. Cook the onions until soft, plus some garlic and red pepper flakes if you want. Put the chard in the skillet, add the broth. Cover the pan and reduce the heat to medium-low and cook until the greens are wilted and almost tender (about 5 minutes). Uncover, bring heat back to medium high and cook until almost dry. Salt as necessary. Enjoy.

#### Universal Taco Seasoning

Universal Taco Seasoning  
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I got tired of buying packets of store-bought taco seasoning, so I experimented with various spices and ratios until I landed on this recipe. I keep a jar of it in the cupboard at all times.  
  
\* 6 tbsp chili powder  
\* 4 tbsp cumin  
\* 4 tbsp corn starch  
\* 3 tbsp onion powder  
\* 1 tbsp salt  
\* 1 tbsp garlic powder  
\* 4 tsp oregano (Mexican oregano, if you've got it)  
\* 2 tsp crushed red pepper  
  
Combine in Mason jar and shake well to combine.  
  
This mix works well for chicken, pork and beef, destined for the grill, oven, slow cooker or stovetop. You could tweak it a bit to target a specific meat, but I like to have a base, universal mix around. Makes it super easy to turn leftover anything into delicious taco filling: Just chop up whatever it is, toss it into a skillet, sprinkle generously with seasoning, then add a bit of water and simmer to impart flavor.

#### Drunken Green Beans

Drunken Green Beans  
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Green beans are fine. Green beans cooked in beer are better. Maybe even the best.  
  
\* 1 Surly fist full of green beans  
\* half a beer  
\* quarter cup vegetable broth  
\* 2 cloves garlic  
\* 1 Tbsp olive oil  
\* some salt, whatever  
  
First peel and dice the garlic and sauté it in the olive oil. Before it gets all burned and ruined, add the beer and vegetable broth.   
   
As the liquid comes to a boil, cut the green beans up. Add the green beans and a pinch of salt and let them simmer for about five minutes. If you like your beans on the softer side you can let it go a little longer. But the trick is to pull them right after the color starts to turn and you've just made a delicious addition to any taco.

#### Black Olives

Black Olives  
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Canned black olives add a sweet and cool meatiness to a traditional American taco.

#### Fresh Corn Tortillas

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