**Poaching** is a method of cooking that employs a liquid, usually a small amount, that is hot but not actually bubbling. The French term is *frisonne* – shivering. The ideal temperature is between 160F and 180F (75-80C). The cooking liquid is often [water](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Water), but [broth](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Broth), [stock](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Stock), milk or juice can also be used.

Delicate foods such as [fish](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Fish), [eggs](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Egg) out of the shell, or fruits are commonly cooked by poaching. The cooking method is also used to partially cook certain foods such as [sweetbread](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Sweetbread) in order to eliminate undesirable flavors and to firm the product before final cooking.

It should be noted that the term is occasionally used to describe foods that have been [boiled](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Boiling) or [simmered](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Simmering).

## Tips for poaching

* Use a thermometer to gauge the temperature of the cooking liquid or watch for bubbling and adjust the heat as necessary.
* Do not allow the food being cooked to touch the bottom of the pan or it may cook too rapidly or burn.
* When poaching eggs, add a splash of vinegar to the water. This will help quickly firm the egg white so multiple eggs can be cooked at once without all sticking together.

## Hole technique

1. Heat water to just under simmering.
2. With a pushpin, carefully pierce one end of the egg.
3. Place egg on a large spoon, and lower it gently into the water. Keep submerged for 20-30 seconds. Some egg protein may start to come out of the hole in "streamers".
4. Raise spoon, gently crack egg, and drop into water.

Pre-cooking the egg by letting some hot water inside the shell will result in a firmer egg once opened, and it will be less likely to come apart in the water while cooking.