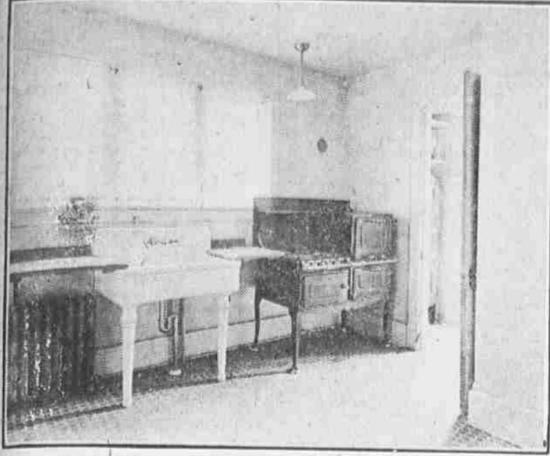


SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT FOR KITCHEN AS WELL AS BUSINESS

Careful Timing Needed for Successful Cooking—"Slow" Oven Not True Economy—Coal Range Customs Hamper Best Results With Gas—Toast Easily Made.



Model kitchen, with Philadelphia-made pressed steel range.

By ANNA A. CARROLL

Many a kitchen has no clock. Many women do not realize that a clock is a necessary part of a kitchen's equipment and that all cooking on a gas range should be accurately timed. This timepiece is absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of scientific results in cooking. Women would save themselves a great deal of nerve strain and many who dread and dislike baking would be able to overcome their distaste if they realized that the greatest part of success in baking is in the heating of the oven and knowing just when to reduce the heat or remove the food from the oven.

The one element that frequently prevents the successful preparation of a beautifully planned meal is that of proper timing. It is difficult to lay down a hard-and-fast rule in regard to timing for the reason that much depends on the individual style and taste in cooking, but should the housewife make frequent use of her kitchen timepiece, it is not long before she formulates for herself rules of time that make successful results a certainty.

For instance, the time required to bake a cake depends entirely on the shape of the pan it is baked in and not on the ingredients of the batter, so that a bowl of cake batter baked in three round, shallow pans or layers, can be baked in 15 minutes; while the same batter baked in a deep pan or loaf shape will require from 45 minutes to an hour.

SYSTEM IN THE KITCHEN.

But with general directions for using the gas range she can proportion her day's work to better advantage, automatically applying to her kitchen what is known today as "scientific management," or, in plain language, just "planning." This is so because the gas range, giving the same temperature at all times, enables her after a few days of timing the preparation of different meals, to know just how much time she will have to spend in the kitchen to prepare any meal she contemplates serving.

It is an extravagance to use a "slow oven" to bake foods requiring a "hot oven." In the instructions given out by the gas company's instructors and in its literature, directions for certain kinds of baking, such as baking powder biscuits, always state that a "hot oven should be used." Instances have come to my attention where women have neglected to follow these instructions, feeling somehow that the hot oven would use more gas and would thus work more to the interest of the meter than to those of the housewife. This is not true at all. The slowly cooked baking powder biscuits are apt to be heavy, poorly browned and unwholesome, whereas the quickly cooked biscuits would have been perfect. These biscuits slowly require more gas in the baking—I should say about 45 per cent. more—and so the woman who insists on slow baking exercises false economy, besides securing inferior results.

FORCE OF OLD HABITS

Gas is often wasted unconsciously by the housewife who lights her oven when she comes into the kitchen to mix a cake or to cook an oven dinner. It is the result of force of habit in the old days when the first thing to be done was to fix drafts, rake the fire and start the coal range into activity, so that it might be ready when the cake was mixed. It did not matter whether she worked 10 minutes or half an hour on the stirring of her batter—as a rule the cake was ready before the coal fire was. So now we find ovens heating half an hour and the thrifty housewife not realizing that she is wasting gas and often, later, mourning over a burnt cake.

Never heat your oven too long. Nearly all failures in cake baking can be attributed to this cause. Too hot an oven when the cake goes in is often the cause of cakes falling in the middle.

In baking layer cakes, heat the oven five minutes with the burners on full and then turn out one of the burners, preferably the back one. Bake three minutes longer and turn out the gas, letting the cake settle about two minutes before turning out on the cooling rack.

For loaf cake, heat the oven about two or three minutes or while you are pouring your batter into the pan, and always turn out the back burner when the cake goes into the oven. A very large or rich cake can be baked with even the one oven burner turned down nearly half way.

In cake baking the process should be divided into three equal parts. In the first period the cake should start to rise; in the second period the cake should continue to rise and slightly brown, and in the third period it should finish browning and shrink from the pan.

GAS HEATS EVENLY.

It is not necessary to paper the bottom and sides of your pan when baking cakes in a gas range. The even heat forms a smooth, brown surface that does not stick. Another factor in saving time and gas is to cook in proper utensils. Bake bread in single loaves instead of two or three loaves in one large pan. Pans 8 1/2 by 9 inches will enable you to bake a wholesome loaf that can be cut in slightly slices, and six loaves can be baked in one rack of an 18-inch oven gas range in 45 minutes. The loaves in the large pan will require from one hour to an hour and a quarter to bake, and as it is almost impossible for the heat to thoroughly bake the centre loaf you have an unwholesome bread which will cause fermentation in the stomach, besides wasting from 15 to 30 minutes' consumption of gas.

The making of palatable, evenly browned toast is a simple matter on the cone-shaped sheet-iron toaster sold for cents, which can be used over one of the ordinary top burners and makes four slices of toast at a time. Light the burner, place the toaster in the centre of the grate that covers the burner. Then cut your bread in even slices, using preferably bread a day old, and place a slice on each side of the toaster.

Four slices of toast can be made in four minutes, allowing two minutes for

the heating of the toaster while you are cutting your bread. If the bread is very fresh and has crumbs on the surface of the slice, pick them off, as they will form little burned specks on the surface of the toast. Toast can be made in quantities in the broiling oven, but as it requires five minutes' heating, if only a small amount of toast is needed it is quicker and more economical to do it on a top burner.

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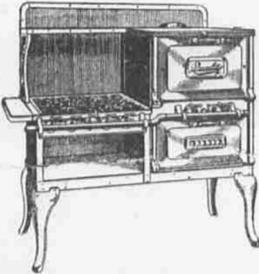
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