

Whether it's a baked wintry pud or sliced summer fruit – a smooth, runny custard is perfect for almost any dessert. We show you how to nail it! Goodbye boxed custard... homemade just tastes better!

Step 1:

Heat 2 cups (500ml) milk and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) sugar together until steaming. Stir until sugar dissolves. Don't boil, or it will become too hot and cook the eggs.

Step 2:

Combine 3 egg yolks, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) sugar and 2 tsp (10ml) cornflour. Whisking yolks, sugar and cornflour together creates a 'buffer' which helps protect the cold egg mixture from separating when the warmed milk mixture is added.



Step 3:

Add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) warm milk to the egg mixture (this is called tempering) which, in essence, brings the egg mixture up to the same temperature as the milk. Whisk vigorously to ensure a lump-free custard. When the egg mixture and milk are the same temperature, it's safe to whisk back into the pot and place on the heat without creating scrambled eggs.



Step 4:

Continuously stir with a whisk while on a low heat to prevent lumps and any burnt bits from

sticking to the bottom of the pot. When the custard evenly coats the back of a wooden spoon and a line can be drawn through it with your finger, it's ready. Remove from heat and add 1 tsp (5ml) vanilla essence. This custard is perfect for pouring over a baked pudding, jelly, fruit or even ice cream.



Cook's note: If you are using a vanilla pod or seeds instead of essence, add it to milk when heating and set aside for 5 minutes to infuse.

Top tip: Similar to custard, making the perfect lump-free white sauce is also an art. It's important to whisk sauce continuously until cooked. Add milk in a thin, steady stream to ensure that the flour and milk blends evenly.