

Boiled French Beans

Ingredients

To each 1/2 gallon of water allow 1 heaped tablespoonful of salt, a very small piece of soda. [Illustration: Scarlet Runner.]

Method

This vegetable should always be eaten young, as, when allowed to grow too long, it tastes stringy and tough when cooked. Cut off the heads and tails, and a thin strip on each side of the beans, to remove the strings. Then divide each bean into 4 or 6 pieces, according to size, cutting them lengthways in a slanting direction, and, as they are cut, put them into cold water, with a small quantity of salt dissolved in it. Have ready a saucepan of boiling water, with salt and soda in the above proportion; put in the beans, keep them boiling quickly, with the lid uncovered, and be careful that they do not get smoked. When tender, which may be ascertained by their sinking to the bottom of the saucepan, take them up, throw them into a colander; and when drained, dish and serve with plain melted butter. When very young, beans are sometimes served whole: when they are thus dressed, their colour and flavour are much better preserved; but the more general way of dressing them is to cut them into thin strips.

Source: Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management (1861)

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