

Beer-Battered Fish & Chips

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 25 minutes

Step 1: Blanching the French Fries

- 4 large russet potatoes*, about 4 lb (1.8 kg)
- frying oil (grapeseed, peanut or canola)

To begin, pour enough oil to reach about 2" -inches high. Heat the oil over medium heat until it reaches between 300-325 F (150-170 C).

*Note: To make French fries, it's best to use high-starch potatoes, such as russet potatoes.

Peel the potatoes and cut into strips about 3/8" -inch by 3/8" -inch wide, or however large you like them. Place the potatoes into the water to prevent browning and also to rinse off the excess starch and surface sugars. The potatoes can be cut and stored in the refrigerator up to one day in advance.

To blanch the potatoes, first set up a baking tray with paper towels or a clean kitchen cloth. Then gather a spider and make sure the oil is at the correct temperature.

Dry a handful of potatoes with another clean kitchen cloth. The potatoes must be dry so they do not splatter when they hit the oil. Working in small batches, place the potatoes onto the spider and gently lower them into the oil. Blanch for about 1 1/2 to 2 minutes or just until softened slightly. When blanching the potatoes, they should not turn golden at all. They should be just cooked through but still have some resistance when you squish them. Once ready, remove them from the oil and place onto the baking tray.

Once all of the potatoes have been blanched, arrange them on the tray so they do not stick together. Then chill in the refrigerator for at least an hour to ensure they are nice and cold. However, they can be stored for up to one day before cooking.

When ready to cook the fish and chips turn the heat up to 375°F (190°C).

Step 2: Mixing the Batter

- 1/2 tsp kosher salt (3 g)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour, 4.5 oz (130 g)
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper (optional)* (1 g)
- 1 cup beer
- 2 large egg whites

Note: Be sure to mix the batter only after you have prepared all of your mise en place and just before you are ready to start frying.

To mix the batter, first mix together the flour, salt, pepper and beer. *Note: The black pepper adds a nice touch of heat and flavor to the batter, but it is optional as it does add little black flecks to the coating. This presentation may not be desirable to some.

Next, whip the egg whites until you reach stiff peaks. Then gently fold them into the batter.

Step 3: Frying the Fish

- 4 fillets of halibut, cod or haddock*, 28 oz (800 g)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour (for dusting), 4.5 oz (130 g)
- kosher salt (to taste)

*Note: The size of the pieces of fish depends on how big you want the portions to be. Somewhere between 6 to 8 ounces per person should be plenty. Just be sure they are all roughly the same size so they cook evenly.

Before you start, make sure the oil is at the correct temperature (it should be between 350-375°F or 180-190°C).

At this point, you have the option to fry the fish one order at a time. Doing it this way allows you to potentially cook an order of chips/fries at the same time. However, this way does take a bit more organization and timing and everyone will potentially eat at different times. If doing it this way, refer to the last step for cooking the chips/fries.

Alternatively, you can fry the fish first and place it into a warm oven while you quickly cook the fries. This way also works well, but the fish may lose a tiny bit of its crispiness.

To fry the fish, first lightly dust it in flour. Shake off any excess and then dip it into the batter. Gently place the fish into the hot oil and fry until golden and cooked through. Carefully flip if necessary to ensure the pieces brown evenly.

Once done, drain the fish and season with a bit of salt while it is still hot. Then either place into a warm oven or serve immediately with the chips/fries.

Step 4: Finishing the French Fries

- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)
- 1 lemon (optional)
- malt vinegar (optional)
- tartar sauce (optional)

First, be sure the oil is at the right temperature (if possible, the heat can be turned up to 400 F (or 200 C) this just cooks them a bit quicker.

To cook the chips/fries, place a handful of the potatoes onto a spider and lower into the oil. It can take anywhere from 1 1/2 to 5 minutes, depending on how crunchy you like your fries and how thick they were to begin with, etc. Once crisp and golden, remove them from the oil and place them directly into a large stainless-steel bowl. Season to taste.

Toss and serve immediately with one piece of the fish. Garnish with lemon wedges and serve with malt vinegar and tartar sauce, if desired.

Continue to work in batches with the remaining fries until all of the fish and chips are served. Enjoy!