

You will need: a blender, four tomatoes, one green bell pepper, one English cucumber, half a red onion, one garlic clove, two 12-ounce cans of tomato juice, red wine vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper

Step
1

Chop all the vegetables.

Step
2

Add the vegetables to the blender.

Step
3

Add the tomato juice to the blender and **blend** until puréed. If the purée is too thick, add water to thin it out. (You can blend in batches if you can't fit all the ingredients in at once.)

Step
4

Add a generous splash of **red wine vinegar** and a few healthy spoonfuls of **olive oil**. Season with salt and pepper and **stir**. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your liking.

Step
5

Serve in a bowl, topped with **homemade croutons**.

*From the store to the kitchen to the table: We outline the steps that get you from raw ingredients to your dinner tonight, free of measurements and complicated techniques. It's a method you'll remember and whip out whenever you like. It is the most basic way to make the thing you're making.

Illustrations by Bill Russell. Find this online at www.chow.com/stories/11790.