

Chicken Katsu

Chicken Katsu is a classic Japanese home-cooked dish served with tonkatsu sauce and a side of shredded cabbage salad. These tender and crispy panko-breaded cutlets are surprisingly easy to make, even on a busy weeknight! They also freeze well and make for a delicious meal-prep item.



★★★★★

4.76 from 135 votes

Prep Time

20 mins

Cook Time

10 mins

Total Time

30 mins

Course: Main Course **Cuisine:** Japanese **Keyword:** chicken, panko **Servings:** 2

Calories: 474kcal **Author:** Namiko Chen

Ingredients

- 1 piece boneless, skinless chicken breast (9.5 oz, 270 g; or use the same weight of chicken thighs or tenders)
- ½ tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt
- ⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 720 ml neutral oil (for deep-frying; enough for 1½ inches (3.8 cm) of oil in the pot)
- 3 Tbsp all-purpose flour (plain flour)
- 60 g panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
- 1 large egg (50 g each w/o shell)
- ½ Tbsp neutral oil (for the egg)

For Serving

- tonkatsu sauce (or make my Homemade Tonkatsu Sauce)
- shredded green cabbage (optional)
- Japanese Sesame Dressing (optional)
- tomato (optional)

Instructions

Before You Start

1. If you prefer not to deep-fry, see my recipe for Baked Chicken Katsu.
2. Gather all the ingredients.

To Butterfly the Chicken

1. Butterfly the chicken breast so the meat is thinner and cooks faster; read more details in my blog post.
To butterfly the chicken breast, split it horizontally from the side (stopping before you cut all the way

through it) and open it like a book. When you open the breast, the two sides will mirror each other, resembling a butterfly (see how in my video). Here, I'd also like to demonstrate the Japanese cutting technique *Kannon biraki* (観音開き) to butterfly the chicken breast. With a sharp knife, score the middle of **1 piece boneless, skinless chicken breast** from the top about halfway through the thickness of the breast; do not cut completely through.

2. Then, turn the knife parallel to the cutting board and slice the chicken from the center toward the left side (or the right side, if you're left-handed) to make it evenly thin. Stop before you cut all the way through it, and open it like a book. Imagine we're creating a French door here.
3. Turn the chicken 180 degrees and butterfly the second side from the center toward the left, creating another "door."
4. Cut the chicken in half down the center. Now you have two pieces.
5. With a meat mallet or the back of the knife, pound the chicken to an even thickness, about 1/4 to 1/2 inch (6 mm to 1.3 cm).
6. Season both sides of the chicken with **1/2 tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt** and **1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper**.

To Heat the Oil and Bread the Chicken

1. Add **720 ml neutral oil** to a medium-size, heavy-bottomed pot (I use a Staub 2.75 QT Dutch oven, 11 inches in diameter). Add enough oil so it is 1 1/2 inches (3.8 cm) deep in the pot; dip a chopstick in the oil to measure. If you use a large pot, you will need to add more oil to get it 1 1/2 inches deep. Start heating the oil to **340°F (170°C)** over medium-low heat (or low heat, if you need more time to bread the chicken). For the breading, prepare three bowls or trays: One with **3 Tbsp all-purpose flour (plain flour)**, one with **60 g panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)**, and one with **1 large egg (50 g each w/o shell)**.
2. Add **1/2 Tbsp neutral oil** to the egg and whisk it together. **Tip:** By adding oil, the meat and breading won't detach from each other while cooking and the juice and flavor from the meat will not escape easily.
3. Coat the chicken with the flour and shake off any excess. Then, coat it with the beaten egg.
4. Finally, coat the chicken with the panko, pressing the panko into the cutlet so that it adheres well. Remove any excess. Repeat with the remaining chicken piece.

To Deep-Fry

1. If you are new to deep-frying, read my How to Deep Fry Food page and get an instant-read thermometer to check the oil temperature. Heat the oil to 340°F (170°C). I use **medium heat** throughout deep-frying, but please increase or decrease the heat to maintain the target oil temperature.
2. When, the oil is at the correct temperature, add one piece of breaded chicken. Fry one piece at a time. Deep-fry for a total of **3 minutes**, turning the chicken once at the halfway point. **Tip:** Do not overcrowd the pot. Remember, your ingredients should take up no more than about half of the oil surface area at any one time. If you add too much food at once, the temperature of the oil will drop quickly and the chicken will absorb too much oil.
3. Deep-fry until both sides are golden brown. Remove the cutlet from the oil and hold it vertically over the pot for a few seconds to drain the excess oil. Then, transfer it to a wire rack or paper towel-lined tray. If

possible, keep it on its side to drain the excess oil.

4. Collect all the crumbs in the oil with a fine-mesh skimmer before you add the next piece of chicken. If you don't clean up these crumbs, they will burn and the oil will get darker. Make sure to keep the oil clean throughout deep-frying.

To Serve

1. Cut the chicken into 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces and serve it with **tonkatsu sauce**. Typically, I serve Chicken Katsu with a side of **shredded green cabbage** and my Japanese Sesame Dressing. I also add a few wedges of **tomato** for color.

To Store

1. You can store the leftovers in an airtight container and store them in the refrigerator for up to 2 days or in the freezer for up to a month. To reheat, bake at 350°F (180°C) for 15–20 minutes for chicken katsu that was thawed in the refrigerator overnight, or for 30 minutes if heating directly from frozen. Check that the inside is warm before serving.

Nutrition

Calories: 474 kcal · Carbohydrates: 21 g · Protein: 19 g · Fat: 35 g · Saturated Fat: 6 g · Polyunsaturated Fat: 18 g · Monounsaturated Fat: 8 g · Trans Fat: 1 g · Cholesterol: 129 mg · Sodium: 535 mg · Potassium: 295 mg · Fiber: 1 g · Sugar: 1 g · Vitamin A: 153 IU · Vitamin C: 1 mg · Calcium: 57 mg · Iron: 2 mg