

Perfect Cucumber Sandwiches for Afternoon Tea

Cucumber sandwiches are best made as fresh as possible, ideally just a few hours before serving, but if you have to make them in advance, store them in the fridge in an airtight container lined with kitchen roll and remove them from the fridge about an hour before serving.

Tip: Organic greenhouse cucumbers are ideal for finger sandwiches as they are less watery, do not have large seeds and do not need to be peeled. However, if you can only find cucumbers with a thick, waxy skin, peel and de-seed them.

DIRECTIONS

Preparation

- 1 Peel the cucumber.
- 2 Slice the cucumber into thin rounds, or if you want to de-seed the cucumber (not strictly necessary), cut the cucumber in half before slicing it, then cut the slices into half-moon shapes.
- 3 **Salt the cucumber slices.** After slicing the cucumber, place the slices in a single layer on a tray lined with paper kitchen towels. Salt the cucumber and leave to rest for twenty to thirty minutes. This will draw out any excess moisture from the cucumber and is essential to avoid soggy sandwiches!
- 4 Pat the slices dry before using them in the sandwiches.

Compile the sandwiches

1. Prepare the bread: For classic cucumber sandwiches spread a generous layer of soft butter on one side of each bread slice. This will add a delicious richness and provide a barrier against the moisture in the cucumber. If you choose to be more creative and use a cream cheese whipped with dill or other similar filling, use a thin layer of the spread, so as not to overshadow the cucumber.
2. Arrange the cucumber slices on half of the bread slices, overlapping the slices so that the entire slice of bread is covered.
3. Add freshly milled black pepper (no salt needed) and if you are using a dill infused spread, a sprinkle of fresh dill.
4. Close the sandwich, press both slices of bread gently together and then trim the crusts using a sharp knife.
5. Slice the sandwich into rectangular, finger-sized portions.