

Crazy for
**BREAKFAST
SANDWICHES**

101

Delicious, Handheld Meals Hot
Out of Your Sandwich Maker



Jessica Harlan

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Ulysses Press

To Breakfast Clubbers everywhere.



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INTRODUCTION

Breakfast: The Most Important Meal

I love breakfasts and brunches—everything about them. Savory egg dishes (preferably involving biscuits or a rich hollandaise sauce), cinnamon rolls and other pastries, decadent pancakes or French toast, you name it.

But, like most people, I rarely have time to make the elaborate morning meals of my dreams, even on the weekends. My solution? For a quick and tasty morning meal, I make a sandwich! You can pack a world of flavors alongside an egg between pieces of bread, English muffin, or even bagel. Healthy or decadent, vegetarian or meaty, fancy or lowbrow—the choice is yours.

And never have breakfast sandwiches been easier or more convenient to make thanks to the array of specifically designed cooking tools at your disposal, including egg rings, microwave egg pans, panini presses, sandwich grills, and even all-in-one breakfast sandwich makers. My personal favorite for making these handheld meals—and the one I used to make all the recipes in this book—is the breakfast sandwich maker from Hamilton Beach.

The Hamilton Beach appliance cooks an egg, toasts the bread, melts the cheese, and heats other ingredients at the same time, then assembles the sandwich with the flick of a lever. Another all-in-one machine is the West Bend Egg and Muffin Toaster, which cooks all your ingredients in separate compartments and then allows for easy assembly.

Another way to produce a perfectly proportioned breakfast sandwich is to use a microwave egg pan or a stovetop egg ring, both of which form a perfectly round cooked egg. Progressive International has a microwave version with 2 round compartments for eggs and another section for heating bacon, sausage, or other ingredients, and Nordic Ware offers an Eggs 'N Muffin Pan that heats up your egg and meat together in one pan. Once you have cooked the egg and heated the other ingredients, I recommend putting the assembled sandwich into a panini press or other sandwich grill to toast the bread and melt the cheese.

Since the recipes in this book use the Hamilton Beach breakfast sandwich maker, the egg is placed in the top ring compartment, while the other ingredients of your sandwich are placed in the bottom. With a little tweaking, any of the recipes in this book can be made using one of the round egg cookers and a traditional sandwich press. If you opt for this multi-step approach, feel free to layer the ingredients in whichever order works best for your particular cooker.

The majority of the recipes in this book are for breakfast sandwiches, but once you have a sandwich maker you'll probably want to maximize its use. That's why I've included creations that can be enjoyed any time of day, from lunch to dinner to dessert. For college students,

office workers, and others with limited kitchen facilities, I hope this will help you utilize your sandwich maker to its full potential.

The Breakfast Sandwich Through the Years

McDonald's is commonly credited with being the first major restaurant chain to offer a breakfast sandwich: its Egg McMuffin debuted in 1972. The creator of this sandwich was one of the chain's franchisees, attempting to make a handheld version of eggs Benedict. His sandwich was an instant success, and other restaurant chains hastened to create their own handheld breakfasts. Burger King introduced its Croissan'wich about a decade later.

Meanwhile, as people recognized the practicality of a hot, nourishing breakfast that's perfectly portable, breakfast sandwiches started popping up on menus at city diners, coffee shops, and food carts. Today these sandwiches are getting fancy: Starbucks and Panera both offer artisan breakfast sandwiches made with rustic bread and fancy cheese.

The Breakfast Sandwich Kitchen

When you get to be as obsessed with making breakfast sandwiches as I've become, you'll see every other meal as an opportunity to squirrel away a few leftovers to tuck into the next morning's meal. Since you only need an ounce or so of an ingredient for a breakfast sandwich, it makes sense to plan your sandwiches in conjunction with other meals in order to use ingredients wisely.

Here are some tips to help you become a breakfast sandwich pro:

Set aside small amounts of cooked meat and vegetables that would work in a breakfast sandwich. A few stalks of grilled asparagus, a couple ounces of broiled salmon, a slice of steak, a few spoonfuls of cooked corn—these are just a few examples of leftovers that can be incorporated into a breakfast sandwich.

If you're making pancakes or waffles on the weekend, cook a couple just the right size to fit your sandwich maker. We always have a ton of pancake batter left over, and I cook it up in 4-inch rounds to use in sandwiches during the week. Sometimes I'll even sprinkle in cheese or herbs to make savory versions.

Be sure to fully preheat your sandwich maker before using it, so that food cooks thoroughly.

I like to plug mine in before I start assembling and preparing the ingredients for my sandwich; usually it's preheated by the time everything is ready to make my sandwich.

I recommend using large eggs in your sandwich maker. Extra-large eggs have the potential to overflow the compartment. I always crack the egg into a small bowl first, giving me more control when I pour it into the sandwich maker. If you're daring, go ahead and crack it right into the top compartment.

Cut or fold foods to fit the sandwich maker. A pair of kitchen shears or an appropriate-size (4 inches in diameter works well) metal biscuit cutter is great for trimming meat, cheese, and bread into rounds.

Precook meat. The top compartment of the sandwich maker gets hot enough to cook an egg, but the bottom compartment doesn't get quite as hot—and certainly not hot enough to cook meat in the short cooking time that's involved. It'll heat meat or melt cheese, but ingredients such as bacon, sausage, and fish should be fully cooked before you put them in the sandwich maker.

Sandwich-Making Tools

You'll find the following tools useful for making the recipes in this book.

Muffin-top pan. This specialized baking pan looks like a muffin pan, but it has wider, shallower indentations (usually about ½ inch deep). I found one with cups the same size as my sandwich maker's compartments (about 4 inches across), and I use it to bake biscuits and other foundations for my sandwiches. A whoopie pie pan is another option, if you can find one with big enough indentations.

Small silicone-coated turning spatula. A mini spatula is just the right size for lifting a piping-hot sandwich from sandwich maker to plate. A plastic or rubbery silicone coating won't scratch the nonstick finish on the appliance.

Custard cup. A little cup or ramekin, big enough to hold about 1 cup of ingredients, is ideal for prepping an egg or mixing up a small batch of ingredients. I buy the glass kind that has a rounded bottom; the shape facilitates thorough mixing.

Biscuit cutter. A round metal biscuit cutter—the kind that looks like a metal ring—is ideal for cutting bread and other ingredients to size. Find one that's as close to the size of your sandwich maker's compartments as possible. Four inches is ideal.

Toaster oven. Some recipes call for small quantities of cooked food, such as biscuits or bacon. A toaster oven is handy so that you don't have to heat up your full-size oven just to make 2 biscuits.

Small skillet. A small skillet—preferably nonstick for easy cleanup—is handy for cooking small amounts of food on the stove before you add them to your sandwich maker. I suggest an 8- or 10-inch size.

Kitchen shears. A clean pair of kitchen shears is useful for cutting ingredients into the right size. I use mine for trimming pancakes and cooked pizza crust.

Sandwich-Making Pointers

After making hundreds of sandwiches, I've picked up a few tricks for producing perfect sandwiches, every time.

When you use softer cheeses, such as Colby or Monterey Jack, it's best to add them to the bottom compartment of the sandwich maker toward the end of the cooking time—especially if they are grated or sliced very thin. Otherwise they'll overcook and become crispy instead of melting.

If your sandwich maker has a nonstick coating (most of them do), you probably won't need to oil it. But for some sticky ingredients, or if you find that your eggs are sticking, the occasional brush of vegetable oil or spritz of cooking spray will help foods release cleanly. A tiny bit of butter can also be brushed or melted onto the compartment, for added flavor.

Bread that's dense or smaller in diameter than the top compartment can sink into the egg, causing an overflow along the edges. While this is mostly an aesthetic matter, you can avoid it by waiting to add the bread until the egg begins to get firm, 2 to 3 minutes.

Let your breakfast sandwich cool for a few moments before eating: the ingredients become very hot!

Tip

Avoid using metal utensils in your sandwich maker—they will damage the appliance's nonstick coating.

The Create-a-Sandwich Chart

On the following pages you'll find 100 recipes for delicious sandwiches—for breakfast and beyond. I hope these recipes will inspire you to experiment with your own concoctions for the sandwich maker. It's as easy as coming up with an exterior (bread) layer and a combination of fillings, spreads, or cheeses to go inside. Use this chart to put together your own creations: pick an ingredient from each column, and you've got your own custom-made breakfast sandwich!

| BASE | EGGS | TOPPINGS | SPREADS | MEAT | SEASONINGS AND MIX-INS | SAUCES/CONDIMENTS |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| English muffin | Whole egg (size large) | Spinach (raw or cooked) | Cream cheese | Cooked bacon | Minced herbs | Salsa |
| Bread | 2 egg whites | Cheese | Goat cheese | Cooked sausage patty | Dry mustard | Hollandaise sauce |
| Flour or corn tortilla | ¼ cup egg substitute | Steamed asparagus | Artichoke spread | Cooked crabmeat | Grated Parmesan cheese | Tomato sauce |
| Pancake | | Sautéed mushrooms | Tapenade | Cooked ground beef or turkey | Capers | Ketchup |
| Waffle | | Black olives | Pub cheese | | Hot sauce | Mustard |
| Biscuit | | Sautéed leeks or onions | Pimento cheese | Chorizo | Chopped scallions | Pesto |
| Crab cake | | Jelly | | Canadian bacon | Anchovies | Enchilada sauce |
| Flatbread | | Tomato slice | Ricotta cheese | | | Cheese sauce |
| Pizza | | Thinly sliced apples | | Veggie sausage | Diced jalapeños | |
| Crumpet | | | | Prosciutto | | |
| | | | | Smoked salmon | | |

Chapter One

CLASSIC SANDWICHES AND BEYOND

In this section you'll find all the classic breakfast combinations that most of us know and love. This chapter is a great starting point for getting to know your sandwich maker and perfecting your sandwich-making technique.

EGG *and* CHEESE MUFFIN

It all starts here: the classic, simple breakfast sandwich. Master this and you'll never need to skip breakfast again. Since there are only 3 ingredients, the cheese you use will really make an impact. Choose American cheese for a sandwich that's creamy and mild, or use a sharp cheddar if you want a zestier sandwich.

Makes 1 sandwich

1 large egg

1 English muffin, split

1 slice cheese (about 1 ounce)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place the bottom half of the English muffin in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, cut side up; lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and place the top muffin half on the egg, cut side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Carefully open the sandwich maker to place the cheese on top of the muffin in the bottom compartment. Close and cook for 30 seconds more, or until the cheese begins to melt. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

SIMPLE FRIED EGG *on* TOAST

While most recipes in this book call for the egg to be cooked through, including the yolk, sometimes I crave a nice runny, creamy yolk. That's easy to achieve in a breakfast sandwich maker—and you can incorporate this same technique for other open-faced egg sandwiches in this book. Elegant in its simplicity, this super-basic breakfast is immensely satisfying.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 slice bread, lightly toasted
- ¼ teaspoon butter
- 1 teaspoon grated Parmesan cheese
- Pinch of ground black pepper

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl; do not pierce the yolk.
- 2 Using a 4-inch round cutter or a knife, cut the bread to fit the sandwich maker. Place it in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker and lower the middle plate.
- 3 Put the butter in the top compartment and swirl it around to coat the entire base, using a silicone spatula. Pour in the egg, being careful to keep the yolk intact; close the lid.
- 4 Cook for 2½ to 3 minutes, or until the egg white is completely cooked but the yolk is still soft. Quickly pull out the middle plate to drop the egg onto the toast; remove from the sandwich maker. Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese and black pepper.

SAUSAGE BISCUIT

Keeping a stash of heat-and-serve sausage patties means you'll always be able to whip up this biscuit sandwich, which is a little more substantial than just a filling of egg and cheese. Vegetarians and health-conscious folks, take note: meatless sausages work very well in this sandwich. I like how the sharpness of cheddar cheese stands up to the spicy biscuit, but of course you can substitute any semi-hard cheese.

Makes 1 sandwich

1 large egg

1 Basic Biscuit, split (recipe on page 98)

1 sausage patty

1 slice cheddar cheese (about 1 ounce)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place a biscuit half in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker. Place the sausage patty on top of it and lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and place the top biscuit half on the egg. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes. Carefully open the sandwich maker and place the cheese on the sausage in the bottom compartment. Close and cook for 30 seconds more, or until the cheese begins to melt and the egg is cooked through. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

BACON, EGG, *and* CHEESE BAGEL

The bacon-egg-and-cheese combination is another classic. It always reminds me of road trips, because for me many a journey has begun with a stop at our local bagel shop for bacon-egg-and-cheese on a sesame bagel. You can use leftover strips of bacon or make a batch of bacon lattice patties to have on hand for sandwiches. If your bagel is too large for the sandwich maker, use a knife to trim it to fit.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 small or mini bagel, split
- 2 slices cooked bacon or 1 Bacon Lattice Patty (instructions on page 101)
- 1 slice cheddar cheese (about 1 ounce)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place the bottom half of the bagel in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, cut side up. Arrange the bacon on top of the bagel and lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and place the top half of the bagel on the egg, cut side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Carefully open the sandwich maker and place the cheese on top of the bacon in the bottom compartment. Close and cook for 30 seconds more, or until the cheese begins to melt. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

HAM *and* BRIE CROISSANT-WICH

This sandwich is quick to put together, but it'll add a little bit of elegance and indulgence to your morning—even if you end up wolfing it down while battling traffic on your way to work! I love the flavor combination of spicy mustard, sweet jam, smoky ham, and creamy Brie.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 small croissant
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon raspberry jam
- 1 slice deli ham (about 1 ounce)
- 1 ounce Brie cheese, sliced

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork. If necessary, use a knife or a 4-inch biscuit cutter to trim the croissant to fit the sandwich maker. Split the croissant in half.
- 2 In a small bowl, stir together the mustard and the jam. Spread onto the insides of the croissant. Place the bottom half of the croissant in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, jam side up. Layer the ham and the Brie over the croissant. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and gently place the croissant top on the egg, jam side down. Close the sandwich maker, but don't press down if it doesn't close completely.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

BACON WAFFLE STACK

I was delighted to discover that most frozen waffles are exactly the right size for breakfast sandwich makers! And these days, there are so many options—including multigrain and high-fiber and gluten-free varieties—that waffles can be a healthy choice for yummy breakfast sandwiches. This simple version includes a perfectly shaped bacon patty and a slice of tangy cheddar cheese.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 2 frozen waffles, thawed
- 1 cooked Bacon Lattice Patty (instructions on page 101)
- 1 slice cheddar cheese (about 1 ounce)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place 1 waffle in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker. Top it with the bacon and lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment. Place the second waffle on top of the egg and close the sandwich maker (don't force it if it doesn't close all the way).
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes. Carefully open and arrange the cheese slice on top of the bacon in the bottom compartment. Close and cook for 30 seconds longer, until the cheese is beginning to melt. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

BENEDICT TO GO

There's something so luxurious about eggs Benedict—the rich, velvety hollandaise sauce and the slab of Canadian bacon. This is certainly not something you could imagine having time to enjoy on a busy weekday morning. But a jar of prepared hollandaise or a packet of the instant kind makes it possible. To make just enough instant hollandaise for a single sandwich, see the note below.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 English muffin, split
- 1 slice Canadian bacon
- 1 tablespoon hollandaise sauce (jarred or instant, see below)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place the bottom half of the English muffin in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, cut side up. Place the Canadian bacon on the muffin and spread about half the hollandaise sauce on top. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment. Drizzle the remaining hollandaise sauce over the egg and place the remaining muffin half on top, cut side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

Tip: SINGLE-SERVE HOLLANDAISE

It's easy to make a single serving from powdered instant hollandaise. In a small, microwave-safe dish, combine 1 tablespoon milk and 1 teaspoon butter. Heat in the microwave at full power for about 30 seconds, or until the butter is melted. Remove and stir in 1 teaspoon powdered hollandaise. Continue to stir until the sauce is creamy and no powdered lumps remain.

THE NEW YORKER

A bagel with lox is a classic New Yorker's breakfast, and this sandwich gives the old favorite a little more substance by adding an egg. I've included my favorite lox accompaniment: capers.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon chopped capers
- 1 small or mini bagel, split
- 1 tablespoon cream cheese
- 1 ounce lox (cold-smoked salmon)

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork until smooth. Stir in the capers.
- 2 If necessary, trim the bagel halves with a knife to fit the sandwich maker. Spread with the cream cheese. Place the bottom half in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, cream cheese side up, and top with the lox. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg mixture into the top compartment and place the top half of the bagel on the egg, cheese side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

DENVER OMELET HASH BROWN STACK

With its crisp hash browns and egg layer studded with bell pepper and ham, this meal is an ode to diner breakfasts. It's technically a sandwich, but you'll probably do better eating it with a fork—with a bottomless cup of coffee alongside, of course.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon minced red bell pepper
- 1 teaspoon minced yellow onion
- 1 tablespoon diced ham or Canadian bacon
- 2 frozen hash brown patties, cooked according to package directions and kept warm
- 1 tablespoon grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon ketchup

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork until smooth. Stir in the bell pepper, onion, and ham.
- 2 If necessary, use a knife to trim the hash brown patties to fit the sandwich maker. Place 1 patty in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg mixture into the top compartment. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Lift the lid and sprinkle the cheese on top of the egg. Close and let cook for 30 seconds more, until the cheese is melted. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker. Top with the second hash brown patty and add the ketchup.

BREAKFAST BURRITO

Tortillas stuffed with refried beans, egg, cheese, and salsa are a popular breakfast option in the Southwest. When I visit my mom in Santa Fe, this is my favorite way to start the day, so I knew I wanted to create a version for my sandwich maker. If I have black olives or a bit of cooked bacon, ground beef, or turkey on hand, I add that to the bottom part of the sandwich, too. Use a chunky salsa for this burrito, so the sandwich won't get soggy.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 large flour tortilla
- 2 tablespoons refried beans
- 1 tablespoon chunky salsa
- 2 tablespoons grated Colby Jack cheese

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Cut 2 rounds from the tortilla to fit the sandwich maker (fold the tortilla in half so you'll only have to cut once). Spread each round with refried beans. Place 1 tortilla round in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, bean side up. Spoon salsa over the beans and sprinkle with half the cheese. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Place the second tortilla round, bean side down, on top. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

THE HAWAIIAN

Sweet-tangy pineapple and salty-smoky ham can be a bit of an acquired taste as a pizza topping. On a breakfast sandwich, though, it totally works—especially since a canned pineapple ring and a slice of Canadian bacon fit perfectly between English muffin halves. You can also use a piece of deli ham or a slice of roast ham, but I like the way Canadian bacon is just the right size and shape.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1 English muffin, split
- 1 slice Canadian bacon
- 1 pineapple ring

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and pierce the yolk with a fork.
- 2 Place the bottom half of the English muffin in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, cut side up. Top with the Canadian bacon and the pineapple ring. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and place the top half of the muffin on the egg, cut side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

Tip

For a delicious twist, add a slice of Swiss or cheddar cheese to the bottom compartment after the egg is set. Cook for 30 seconds more, until the cheese is melted.

GREEN EGGS *and* HAM

This playful sandwich is a favorite with kids. It's inspired by the Dr. Seuss book, of course, so why not serve it on March 2 to celebrate the iconic author's birthday and also National Read Across America Day? I often fix this sandwich in the summer, too, when I'm constantly making pesto with basil from my garden. Feel free to save yourself some work and use store-bought pesto.

Makes 1 sandwich

- 1 large egg
- 1½ teaspoons pesto
- 1 English muffin, split
- 1 slice Canadian bacon

- 1 Preheat the breakfast sandwich maker. Break the egg into a small bowl and whisk lightly with a fork. Stir in the pesto until fully mixed.
- 2 Place the bottom half of the English muffin in the bottom compartment of the heated sandwich maker, split side up; top with the Canadian bacon. Lower the middle plate.
- 3 Pour the egg into the top compartment and place the top half of the muffin over the egg, split side down. Close the sandwich maker.
- 4 Cook for 4 minutes, or until the egg is set. Slide open the middle plate to assemble the sandwich and remove it from the sandwich maker.

sample content of Crazy for Breakfast Sandwiches: 75 Delicious, Handheld Meals Hot Out of Your Sandwich Maker

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