

Blanching

Kitchen

Brief boiling then ice water, and the three jobs it does.

Used for colour, for texture, and for preparing to freeze.

1

Boil heavily salted water

More water than you think — the temperature must not drop.

2

Add the food briefly

Seconds to a few minutes, depending on the item.

3

Straight into ice water

This stops the cooking dead. It is the point of the method.

4

Drain and dry

Especially before freezing.

TIMES

Green beans: 2–3 min

Broccoli: 2 min

Spinach: 30 seconds

Tomatoes to peel: 20 seconds

Almonds to skin: 60 seconds

Blanching before freezing deactivates the enzymes that would otherwise degrade colour and flavour in the freezer.