

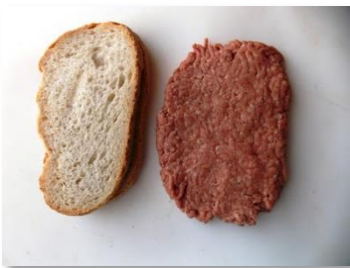
THE 6 SECRETS TO CLEO COYLE'S PERFECT PATTY MELT

Text & photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi, who writes the [Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini

Patty melts are delicious and (IMO) even better than burgers. The traditional version is made with juicy ground beef, but you can mix it with ground turkey or chicken. The only drawback to making these instead of burgers is an extra step or two in the process, which is why I make them extra-large—8 big ounces per patty melt. No, I don't eat the whole thing myself, and that's the point. Cut this mondo patty melt in half, and you've got dinner for two. Cook two of these big boys, and you've got dinner for four. Less sandwiches = less work. And less work always helps me eat with joy! ;) ~ **Cleo**



THE SIX SECRETS—Secret #1: Be patient with grilling the onions. Cook them long enough to caramelize and you'll have a much tastier sandwich. →



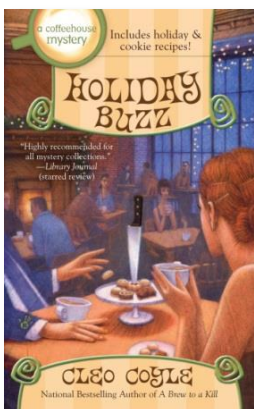
← **Secret #2:** Use large slices of bread and shape the patty long to fit the bread.

← **Secret #3:** Don't make the patty or bread slices too thick, about an inch.

Secret #4: Once your ingredients are ready (the onions caramelized; the burger cooked), build the entire sandwich on a spatula. This allows → time to fix the ingredients just right. Then you can move the spatula to the hot pan, and slip the entire sandwich into the bubbling butter in one quick move.

Secret #5: To prevent your grilled onions from falling out, follow the "building" instructions (see them on page 3). The trick is with the placement of the cheese.

Secret #6: Use the spatula to press the sandwich while cooking; a way to make a tasty "pressed sandwich" without a sandwich press.



Our readers might recall this fantastic sandwich from our 12th *Coffeehouse Mystery*, [Holiday Buzz](#). Coffee hunter Matteo Allegro, weary of the healthy but flavorless appetizers served at a string of Manhattan holiday parties, ventures into the winter night to bring back a more satisfying snack—this 8-napkin patty melt. He shares it with his partner in the coffee business, Clare Cosi, while she shares the facts (and a cogent theory) behind the murder of a part-time employee. To see more recipes from this wonderfully entertaining *Coffeehouse Mystery*, [click here](#).

CLEO COYLE'S 8-NAPKIN PATTY MELT

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Be sure to read the Six Secrets on page 1 of this recipe to get the absolute best results in making the perfect patty melt. ~ Cleo

**Makes two 8-ounce Patty Melts
(for four servings)**

Ingredients:

- 1 large yellow onion
- (a bit of) vegetable oil and butter
- 4 large slices of bread (*see my note below**)
- 16 ounces (1 pound) ground beef
- 8 slices of Swiss or cheddar cheese
- Kosher or sea salt

*A note on the bread: A patty melt this big requires large (but not overly thick) slices of bread. Fresh crusty Italian or rye bread from a rustic loaf will make a truly amazing patty melt. If using pre-packaged bread, go for the super-sized sandwich-style and not the standard slices.



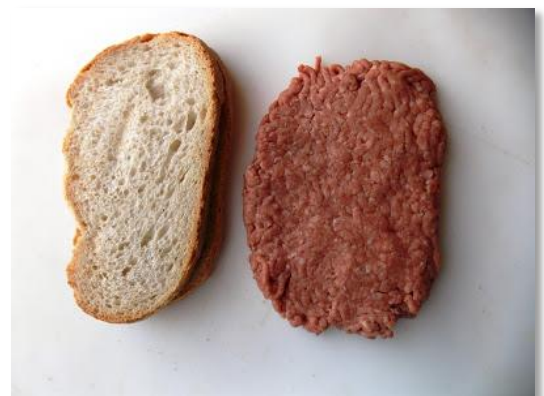
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Directions:

Step 1: Cook the onion—Peel and chop the large yellow onion. Place a pan over low heat, melt a bit of butter, add a splash of oil, and stir in the onions. Slowly cook the onions, stirring often, until they are caramelized (soft, sweet, and dark golden brown), about fifteen minutes. Set the cooked onions aside.

Step 2: Form and cook the patty—The shape of the ground meat patties should fit the bread that you're using, so shape the meat accordingly. Each patty should be 8-ounces in weight and about 1-inch in thickness (or a little less). Cook the patties over medium-high heat, three to four minutes per side. For best results, try to flip the patties only once. When the patties are cooked through, set aside.



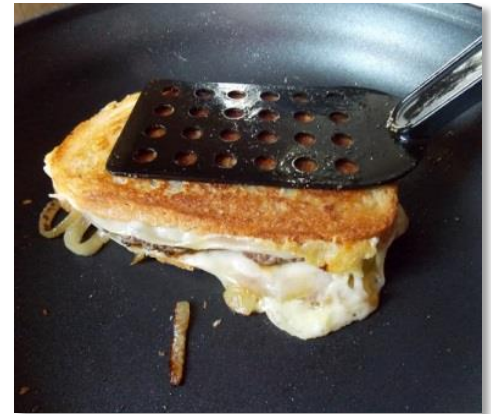
Step 3: Build your sandwich—Start by buttering two slices of the bread...

- Place 1 slice on a spatula, buttered side down.
- Lay 1 or 2 thin slices of cheese on the bread.
- Place the cooked meat patty onto the cheese.
- Place a 3rd slice of cheese over the patty.
- Add half the caramelized onions.
- A final slice of cheese should cover the onions (when it melts this last slice will help to hold the savory sweet onions inside the sandwich).
- Finally, top the patty melt with a slice of buttered bread, but this time you want the buttered side up.

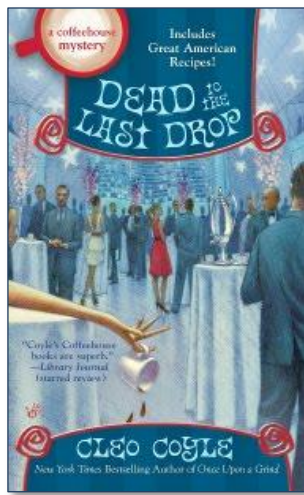
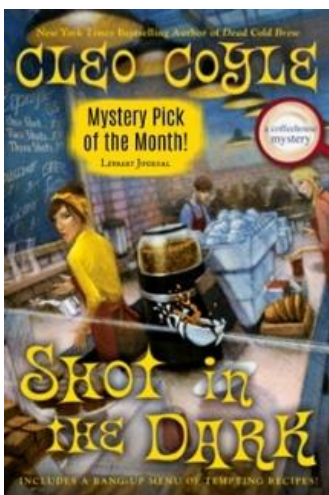


Step 4: Grill and press—Heat a skillet and add a bit of butter. When the butter begins to bubble, use your spatula to transfer the fully-built sandwich to the hot pan. From this point on, treat the patty melt as if it were a grilled cheese sandwich...

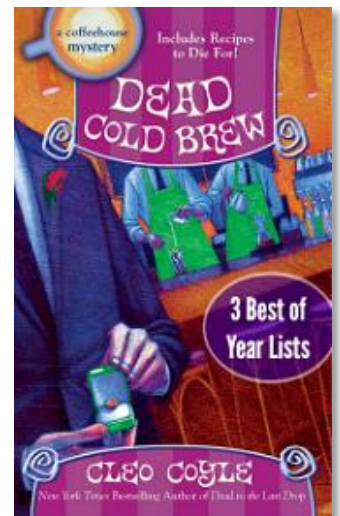
Toast one side for 3 to 4 minutes and then flip. After flipping, press down hard on the sandwich with your spatula. Pressing the patty melt as it cooks will help the parts of the sandwich fuse together. Grill for 3 or 4 more minutes, until the cheese is completely melted. (Make the 2nd sandwich exactly the same way.)



Serve hot! A dill pickle is a thing of beauty with a patty melt. The bright tartness of the pickle (not to mention the happy, green color) nicely complements the rich unctuousness of the sandwich. Cole slaw, French fries, or potato chips are tasty sides, too. However you serve it, I certainly hope you will...eat with plenty of joy!



The [Coffeehouse Mysteries](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes. To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at www.CoffeehouseMystery.com And her recipe blog at www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com



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Pick of the Month! —LJ

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