



Get Cookin' with Beans!

Adding Beans to Your Meals is Easy and Tasty!

Follow these three easy steps for cooking dry beans:

1. **Sort:** Before soaking beans, pick them over and remove any damaged beans, small stones or dirt.
2. **Rinse:** To remove dirt, rinse beans with cold water.
3. **Soak:** Most beans will rehydrate to triple their dry size, so be sure to start with a large enough pot.

Choose one of the following ways to soak your beans:

Hot Soak: Hot soaking is the best method to reduce intestinal gas. In a large pot, add 10 cups of hot water for each pound of dry beans; heat to boiling and let boil 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and set aside for up to 4 hours.

Quick Soak: In a large pot, add 10 cups of hot water for every pound of dry beans; heat to boiling and let boil 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and set aside for at least 1 hour.

Overnight Soak: For each pound of dry beans, add 10 cups of cold water and let soak overnight or at least eight hours.

4. **Cook:** Drain soaking water and rinse beans. Cover beans with fresh water. Simmer for 1½ to 2 hours until tender.

I CAN do it!

Canned beans save time when preparing bean dishes. Substitute canned beans in recipes calling for cooked dry beans or use in no-cook dishes, such as dips and salads.

To use canned beans:

- Drain beans in a colander or strainer.
- Rinse with cold water to wash away any packing liquid and excess salt.
- Add to recipes at the end of the cooking time to prevent mushiness.

Cooking Tips:

- Avoid broken or mushy beans by boiling gently and stirring very little.
- Taste-test beans often for desired tenderness.
- Add some flavor. Add minced onion, garlic, green pepper, diced carrots or celery, chopped tomatoes or cooked meat during cooking.
Add foods containing acids, such as tomatoes, lemon juice, vinegar or catsup last. They will slow the cooking and softening of the beans.
- Save time by cooking up dry beans before-hand and storing in the freezer. Freeze cooked beans in one to two cup amounts for up to six months. Before freezing, cover the cooked beans with the cooking liquid or water to prevent freezer burn.
To thaw frozen beans:
 - Defrost in the microwave, or
 - Place them in the refrigerator overnight, or
 - Place them in a pan of WARM water for one hour. Use in any recipe calling for cooked beans, or
 - Put frozen beans directly into a pot of soup. They will defrost and cook right along with the other ingredients.

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