



SIMPLE MEALS  
& SHARED CONNECTIONS:

# A COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

with basic cooking tips, lunch, dinner,  
on-the-go meals and snacks





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# SIMPLE COOKBOOK

## Introduction

This cookbook was created by students in SOWK 380 (Social Work and Community Development) as part of a class project. Students organized *Simple Meals and Shared Connections: A Community Cooking Class*, a hands-on event hosted in collaboration with the UFV-SUS Food Bank. With simple and nutritious ingredients in mind, the class hosted UFV students and focused on building confidence and skills for making simple, affordable meals using ingredients commonly found in food hampers.

Inside, you'll find the recipes used during the cooking class, along with additional ideas developed by students. Each recipe is simple, nourishing, and adaptable to what's on hand in your pantry, while respecting diverse cultural tastes and the real-life limits of budget, time, and kitchen equipment.

We hope that anyone, anywhere, can enjoy a simple, nourishing meal.

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### UFV SUS Food Hampers may include:

#### Every hamper contains

- 1 x rice (~907g / 2lb)
- 1x pasta (~900g)
- 1x pasta sauce (680mL)
- 2x canned vegetables or fruit (398mL each)
- 1x peanut butter (500g)

#### Vegan hamper, may also include:

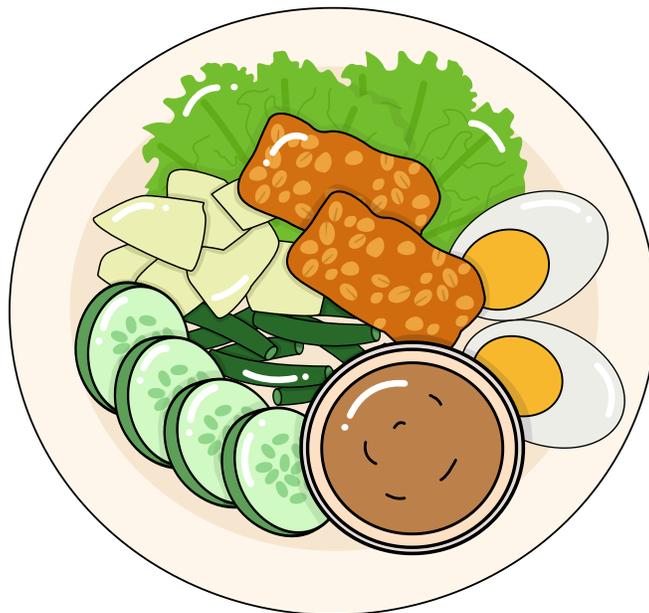
- 4x cans protein (lentils, chickpeas, beans, 540mL each)
- OR, 1 bag of dried lentils (450g) for 2 canned items

#### Meat hamper, may also include:

- 3x cans protein (chicken, tuna, beans, lentils, chickpeas, ~120-156mL each)



EASY  
MEALS





# CARROT & CABBAGE STIR-FRY

This quick stir-fry is a warm, colourful dish made with crisp cabbage and carrots.

**Serves: 1**

## Ingredients

- ½ cup of rice
- ¼ cup of carrots & peas (canned or frozen)
- ½ cup of green cabbage
- ¼ cup of chopped celery
- 1 tsp of cooking oil (vegetable, canola, or olive)
- 1 tsp of soy sauce
- A pinch of sugar
- A pinch of black pepper
- A pinch of garlic powder

## Tools

- Large mixing bowl
- Large pot with lid
- Large frying pan/wok
- Colander (strainer)
- Kitchen knives
- Chopping boards
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Can opener

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Cook Rice

- Cook rice into  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water
- Set aside when done

*See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.*

**Pro-tip:** You can do steps 2-3 while the rice is cooking to save time!

## 2 Prep Carrots, Peas

- Drain the canned carrots and peas using a colander
- Rinse lightly using cold water and shake gently to remove excess water
- Lay carrots and peas on paper towels to dry (they do not need to fully dry)

## 3 Chop Veggies

### Celery

- Rinse using cold water. Pat dry with a towel
- Cut bottom ends and leaves off. Then cut each stalk in half lengthwise
- Line the strips up and chop into small pieces (~0.5-1cm)

### Cabbage

- Remove any tough outer leaves. Wash the cabbage
- Cut in half. Then, remove the core and thinly slice

## 4 Cook Stirfry

- Heat up oil in a pan over medium-high heat (1 minute)
- Add the celery occasionally stirring (1-2 minutes)
- Add cabbage and cook until softened but still slightly crisp (3-4 minutes)
- Add the cooked rice to the pan. Stir occasionally for 2-3 minutes

## 5 Season and Serve

- Season with sugar, soy sauce, black pepper, garlic powder and continue stirring (1 minute)
- Finally, add the carrots and peas and heat them through (1-2 minutes)

## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More vegetables?

- Frozen mixed vegetables
- Fresh carrots, broccoli, cabbage, zucchini, snap peas
- Canned mushrooms
- Canned corn

### Rice alternatives?

- Brown rice
- Jasmine rice
- Quinoa
- Noodles

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# ON-THE-GO BURRITOS

This easy, quick meal can be made with almost anything in the fridge, or very few ingredients if you don't have much on hand.

**Serves: 2**

## Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 1/2 cup beans or chickpeas
- 1/2 of a bell pepper
- 1/2 cup of corn
- 1/4 cup onion (optional)
- 1/2 cup protein (chicken, beef)
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 2 tortillas or taco shells

*Optional: Salsa. Also works as a substitute for spices*

## Tools

- Frying pan
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Measuring spoons

Optional: saran wrap, plastic bags or container for storage

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Cook protein

### Meat

- Cook ½ cup of chosen protein and cook until heated through

### Beans

- Boil chosen protein until softened.

*See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.*



### **protein options:**

*beans/chickpeas/ tofu  
beef/chicken/pork*

## 2 Cook Rice

Cook rice into 2 cups of water

*See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.*



## 3 Prep Vegetables

Chop any chosen vegetables into bite sized pieces

Vegetable options:

- Peppers
- Tomatoes
- Lettuce
- Onion
- Corn

## 4 Season Protein

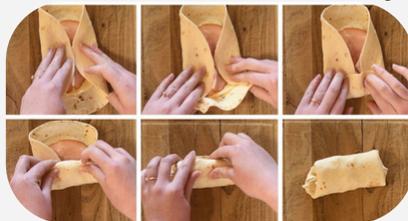
- Add ¼ tsp chilli powder and ¼ tsp of paprika to the cooked meat (or to taste). If you do not have meat, you can add it to the beans or rice.

If you do not have any spices, salsa and/or hot sauce work as good substitutions.

## 5 Build tortilla

Lay out the tortilla and add all of the ingredients inside. Don't fill it too much, otherwise you will not be able to close it.

### **How to fold a torilla wrap**



*If you do not have tortilla wraps or shells, you can make it into a salad*

## Optional

### **meal prep + freeze**

To save this meal for later, complete steps 1-5 and then wrap it in saran wrap, plastic bag or container. Put them into the fridge for 2-3 days or the freezer for 3 months.

To reheat: take out of freezer/fridge and put it in the microwave for 1 minute or until warm.

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# CREAMY MUSHROOM TUNA PASTA

A simple, comforting dish that comes together quickly with everyday ingredients.

**Serves: 2**

## Ingredients

- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 ½ cups water
- 2 cups of dry pasta noodles
- ½ cup peas (canned or frozen)
- 1 can of drained tuna (or ½ can of beans)
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- Salt and pepper (to taste)

## Tools

- Cooking pot
- Stir spoon
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Can opener
- Colander (strainer)

# Before you start . . .

Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.

## 1 Prepare protein

- Open cans with a can opener
- Drain the liquid from the tuna
- Drain and rinse the peas (and beans) using the strainer in the sink



**protein options:**  
beans/chickpeas  
tofu/beef/chicken/pork

## 2 Start Cooking

- Add can of mushroom soup and 1.5 cup of water into a pot
- Add 1 tsp garlic powder and 1 tsp onion powder
- Over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Stir every 1-2 minutes to avoid burning



## 3 Add Pasta & Protein

- Add 1 can of tuna, the beans and 2 cups of pasta noodles
- Turn the temperature down to medium/low and cover with the lid
- Stir every 2 minutes and cook for 10 minutes

\*Add an additional ½ cup water if too thick

## 4 Add Vegetables

- After 10 minutes, add peas to pasta and stir until mixed in
- Cook another 2-3 minutes



## 5 Season + Serve

- Remove the pot from heat and let stand for 5 minutes with the lid on
- Once cool add salt and pepper to taste



## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different protein?

- Beans
- Chicken
- Beef
- Tofu

### More or different vegetables?

- Carrots, corn or other veggies (fresh, canned or frozen)

### Don't want pasta?

- Rice

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# MEDITERRANEAN CHICKPEA SALAD

A fresh, colourful dish packed with bright flavours and wholesome ingredients.

**Serves: 3-4**

## Ingredients

- 2 tomatoes (fresh or canned)
- 1 cucumber
- 1 can chickpeas
- 350g uncooked fusilli pasta
- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

## Tools

- Large pot with lid
- Kitchen knives
- Chopping boards
- Can opener
- Colander (strainer)
- Measuring spoons
- Mixing bowls

# Before you start . . .

Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.

## 1 Cook Protein (optional)

### Meat

- Cook ½ cup of chosen protein and cook until heated through

### Beans

- Boil chosen protein until softened

See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance

**protein options:**  
beans/chickpeas  
tofu/beef/chicken/pork

## 2 Cook Pasta

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil
- Pour pasta into pot
- Cook for 8-12 minutes, or until soft
- Once done, drain and rinse under cold water



## 3 Mix Dressing

- Pour the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic powder, dried oregano, salt and black pepper.
- Whisk together and set aside.



## 4 Add Veggies

- Cut the tomatoes and cucumber into cubes and add to a large bowl
- Drain and rinse the chickpeas. Add to mixture



## 5 Toss & Serve

- Add the finished pasta to the bowl with the veggies and mix
- Drizzle the dressing over the salad and mix until everything is coated evenly



## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different protein?

- Cheese: feta, goat
- Beans
- Chicken/pork/beef
- Tofu

### Want to add more flavour?

- Fresh cilantro
- Green onion
- Red onion

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# BLACK BEAN BURGERS

A hearty, flavourful plant-based option that's both satisfying and easy to make.

**Serves: 4**

## Ingredients

- 2 cans black beans
- 1 cup breadcrumbs (seasoned or unseasoned)
- 1/4 cup grated white onion
- 1 egg
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- Salt and pepper
- Oil or butter
- 4 buns
- Optional, but recommended: Hot sauce, cheese, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, lettuce, tomato

## Tools

- Can opener
- Colander (strainer)
- Large mixing bowl
- Fork or potato masher
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Mixing spoon or spatula
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Skillet or frying pan
- Spatula

## Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

### 1 Mash the beans

- Drain, but do not rinse, the black beans
- Place them in a bowl and use a fork to mash them. Keep mashing until they're mostly broken up, but still have some whole beans visible.



### 2 Mix bean mixture

- In the same bowl add the breadcrumbs, onion, egg, chili powder, salt, pepper, and hot sauce
- Stir until everything is combined
- Let the mixture sit for 5 minutes



### 3 Make the patties

- Form the bean mixture into ~2 inch balls
- Flatten the balls into patties slightly larger than the buns you're using



### 4 Cook the patties

- Heat 2-3 tbsp of oil in a skillet over medium-low heat
- Place the patties in the pan and cook them about 5 minutes on each side



### 5 Optional: Add Cheese

#### If using cheese

- Place a slice of cheese onto each patty after done cooking
- Cook until the cheese is melted

**Pro tip!** Place a lid on the skillet to help the cheese melt if needed



### 5 Assemble the burger

- Spread desired condiments on the buns (mayonnaise, hot sauce, ketchup or mustard)
- Place the patties on the buns
- Top the patties with lettuce and tomato
- Close the bun and enjoy your burger!

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# ONE-POT CHILI

A hearty, comforting meal that's packed with rich flavour and simple ingredients.

**Serves: 4**

## Ingredients

- 3 cans of beans (any of navy, kidney, black, chickpea, pinto, black eye beans)
- 1 can diced tomatoes (or seasoned diced tomatoes)
- 1 can of tomato paste
- 1 can pasta sauce (or 2 cups)
- 1 tbsp chilli powder
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- Salt and pepper

## Tools

- Pot
- Stir spoon
- Strainer
- Measuring spoon
- Can opener

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Prep

- Open the cans of beans and corn, drain and rinse using a strainer
- Open cans of tomato paste, diced tomatoes and pasta sauce



## 2 Ready to Cook

- Empty all the cans into the pot
- Turn the stove to medium heat and bring to a simmer (just before boiling)



## 3 Spice

- Add the garlic powder, onion powder, chilli powder into the pot
- Add in salt and pepper to taste



## 4 Simmer

- Once simmering, lower heat to low/medium
- Cook for 30 minutes, stir every 3-5 minutes

Keep the lid off



## 5 Time to Eat

- Turn off the stove
- Put the lid on and let it cool for 5 minutes
- Serve and top with sour cream and cheese (optional)

*\*Can also eat on rice or scoop with tortilla chips*



## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different vegetables?

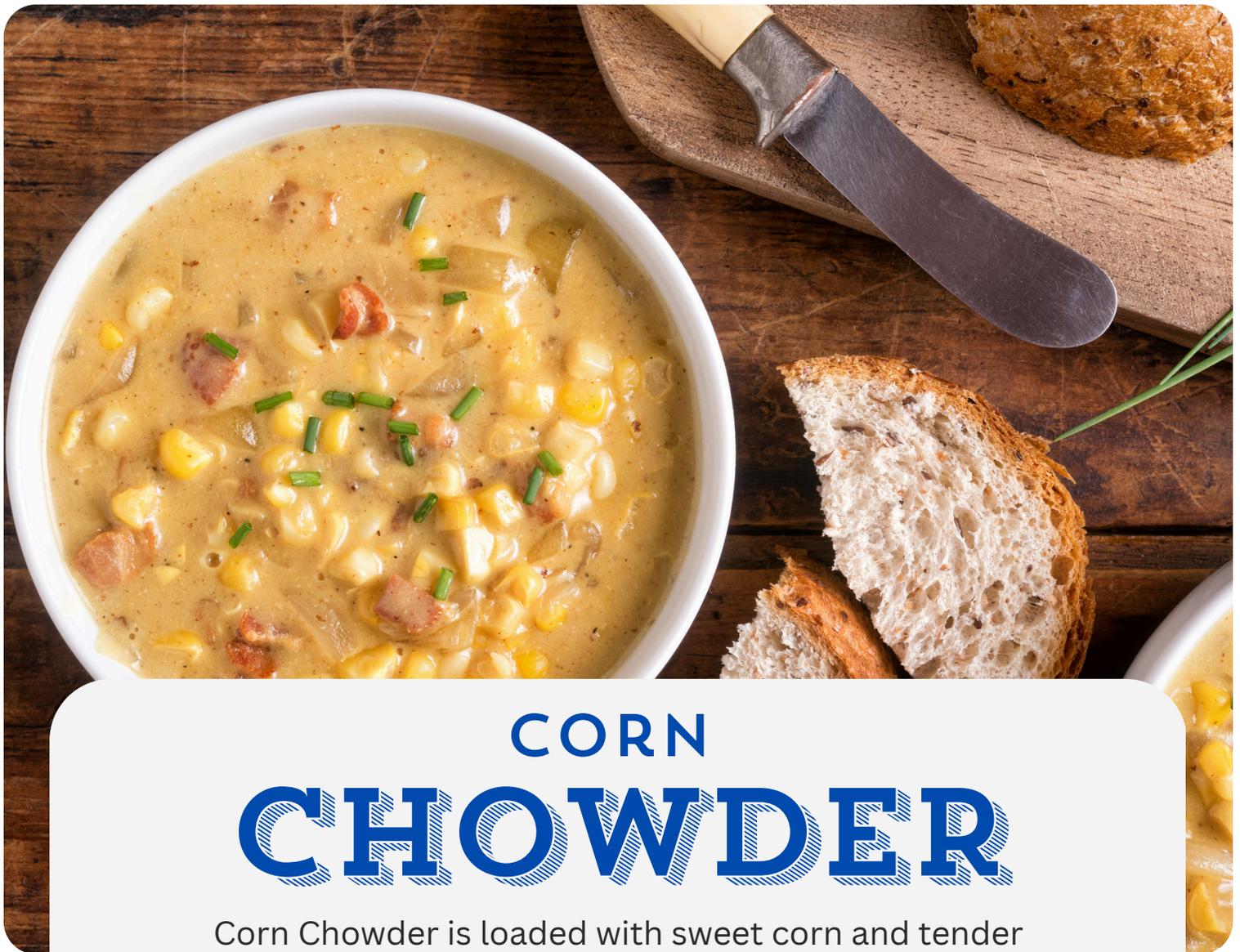
- Bell peppers, carrots, corn or onions (frozen or fresh)
- Fresh cilantro on top
- Green onion on top

### More spicy or missing spices?

- 1 tsp cayenne pepper or chili flakes
- Use pre-made chilli or taco seasoning

*\*This meal is easy to freeze for another day*

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# CORN CHOWDER

Corn Chowder is loaded with sweet corn and tender potatoes in a creamy and flavour-packed corn broth.

**Serves: 2-4**

## Ingredients

- 3 potatoes
- ½ an onion
- 2 carrots (fresh, canned or frozen)
- 1 tbsp butter
- 3 cups regular milk
- 1 cup water (or broth)
- 2 tbsp flour
- 1 can corn (or 1 cup frozen)
- Salt and pepper

## Tools

- Can opener
- Large pot
- Frying pan
- Spatula or cooking spoon
- Cutting board
- Knife

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Make the broth

- Chop the onions, carrots and potatoes into cubes
- Add the butter in a large pot
- Sauté the chopped onions in oil until soft on medium heat
- Pour in the flour and whisk constantly for about a minute
- Gradually pour in the milk, and whisk while you are pouring

## 2 Make the broth

- Add in the water
- Add in the corn, carrots, potatoes and any other vegetables and cooked protein
- Season with salt, pepper any other desired spices
- Heat until potatoes are soft and vegetables are tender. Cooking time should take around 15 minutes

## 3 Serve & Enjoy

- Cool the soup and then serve
- To top it off, you can add crispy bacon, green onion, sour cream, jalapeños or cheese



## 4 Storage + Reheating

**To Refrigerate:** Cool the soup completely to room temperature before storing, then transfer it to airtight containers and refrigerate for up to 4 days.

**To Reheat:** Add soup to a saucepan and reheat over low heat, stirring frequently. Alternatively reheat in the microwave, stirring every 30 seconds

## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different protein?

- Fried bacon
- Chicken, beef, shrimp, tofu

### More or different vegetables?

- Celery
- Bell Peppers
- Green onion/chives on top

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# LENTIL STEW

Your one pot easy lentil soup. Filling & delicious!

**Serves: 4**

## Ingredients

- 4 cups water
- ½ tbsp oil
- 1 cup dried lentils
- 1 cup tomatoes (fresh or canned)
- 4 carrots (or 1 can)
- ½ an onion
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp paprika (optional)

## Tools

- Large pot
- Colander (strainer)
- Cutting board
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Spatula or stir spoon
- Knife

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Saute Onions

- Roughly chop the onions and tomatoes
- Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat
- Add the chopped onions and stir often for 4-5 minutes until just starting to turn golden

## 2 Add lentils

- Put lentils in a colander and rinse under cold running water to remove any dirt
- Add the lentils, tomato, water and seasoning to the pot and stir



## 3 Cook the stew

- Bring the pot to a boil
- Cover the pot with a lid and reduce heat to low
- Simmer for 30-40 minutes or until the lentils and vegetables are tender



## 4 Serve

Serve and enjoy!

This meal pairs well with

- Kale salad
- Bread or buns

## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different vegetables?

- Potatoes
- Kale
- Celery

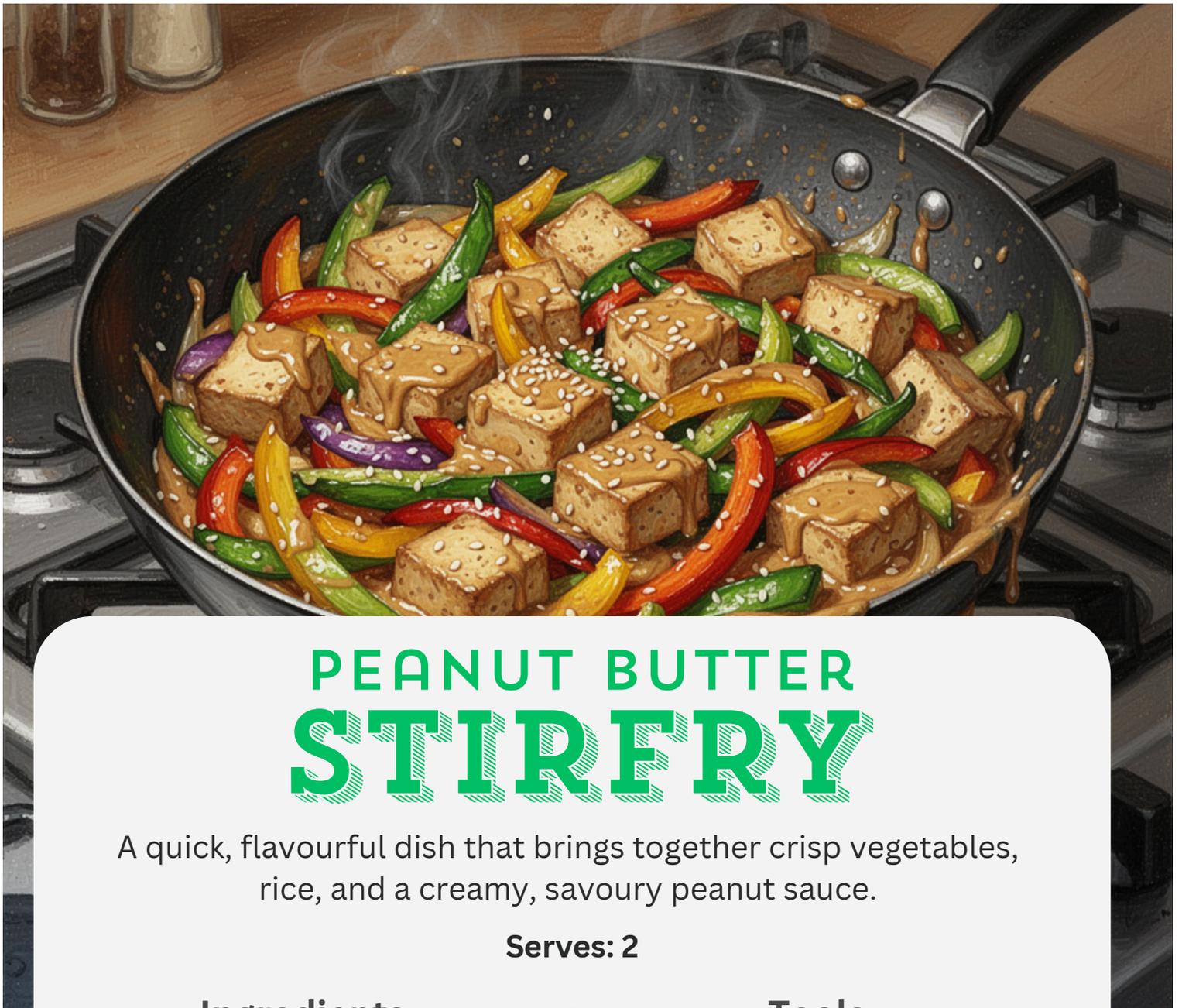
### More flavour?

- Garlic (fresh or powder)
- Substitute water for chicken, beef or vegetable broth

### More spice?

- Paprika
- Chili powder or flakes
- Hot sauce.

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# PEANUT BUTTER STIRFRY

A quick, flavourful dish that brings together crisp vegetables, rice, and a creamy, savoury peanut sauce.

**Serves: 2**

## Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 1 cup chosen protein
- 1 bell pepper
- 1 carrot (or ½ a can/ ½ cup frozen)
- 2–3 tbsp peanut butter
- 2–4 tbsp warm water
- 1 tbsp oil (vegetable, canola, or olive)
- Salt

## Tools

- Medium pot with lid
- Frying pan or skillet
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Spoon or spatula
- Small bowl

# Before you start . . .

First, collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.

## 1 Cook Protein

### Meat

- Cook 1 cup of chosen protein and cook until heated through

### Beans

- Boil chosen protein until softened.

See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.



### protein options:

beans/chickpeas  
tofu/beef/chicken/pork

## 2 Cook Rice

Cook rice into 2 cups of water

See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.

**Pro-tip:** You can do steps 3-5 while the rice is cooking to save time!



## 3 Chop Veggies

- Cut the bell pepper into thin strips
- Cut the carrots into thin strips or cubes if easier

You can also add: broccoli, cabbage, frozen vegetables, zucchini or snap peas



## 4 Stir Fry Veggies

- Heat oil in a pan over medium heat
- Add vegetables, garlic and ginger (optional)
- Stir-fry for 4-6 minutes until tender but still slightly crispy



## 5 Make Sauce

- Mix peanut butter with warm water until smooth
- Stir in soy sauce, chili and other spices (optional)

## 6 Combine

- Add the sauce and protein to the stir-fry and mix evenly
- Spoon over rice and serve warm

## Add-ons/ substitutes

### More or different vegetables?

- Broccoli, cabbage
- Frozen mixed vegetables
- Zucchini or snap peas

### More flavour?

- Squeeze of lime or lemon for brightness
- A little honey or sugar for sweetness
- Chili powder or hot sauce

### Rice alternatives

- Brown rice, Jasmine rice
- Quinoa, Noodles

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!



# ASIAN FRIED RICE

A fast and flexible recipe using rice, eggs, and whatever veggies or protein you have on hand.

**Serves: 2**

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp oil (sesame, canola...)
- 2 eggs
- 3 green onions
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tsp fresh ginger (or powder)
- 1 cup rice
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 cup protein (chicken, pork, shrimp, tofu)
- ½ cup peas (frozen or canned)
- Salt and pepper

## Tools

- Large skillet or frying pan
- Spatula or wooden spoon
- Small bowl
- Fork or whisk
- Cutting board
- Knife (for chopping veggies)
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Garlic press (optional – you can mince garlic with a knife if using fresh garlic)

# Before you start . . .

First, collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.

## 1 Cook Protein

### Meat

- Cook 1 cup of chosen protein and cook until heated through

### Beans

- Boil chosen protein until softened.

See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.



### protein options:

beans/chickpeas  
tofu/beef/chicken/pork

## 2 Cook Rice

Cook rice into 2 cups of water

See 'how to' guide for further instructions if you need guidance.

**Pro-tip:** You can do steps 3-5 while the rice is cooking to save time!



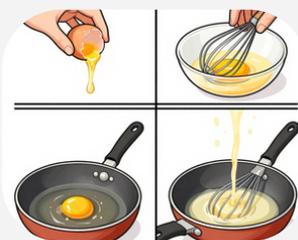
## 3 Cook onions, garlic, and ginger

- In another, larger pan, heat the oil over medium-high heat
- Add the onions, garlic, and ginger, and saute for about 30 seconds



## 4 Cook the eggs

- Crack the eggs in a bowl and whisk until combined
- In the same pan, pour the eggs onto the pan continuously stirring (scrambling) until cooked through



## 4 Combine

- Add the rice, and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes.
- Add the protein, peas, add-ons and salt and pepper to taste.
- Cook for another minute, stirring well to mix and heat everything through.



## Add-ons / Substitutes

### More or different protein?

- Chicken/ pork/ beef/ shrimp
- Tofu

### More or different vegetables?

- Bell Peppers
- Snap peas

### More spice?

- Chili flakes or powder
- Hot sauce

**Note:** You can adjust the proportions to suit your taste

**Leftovers?** Refrigerate for up to 3 days, freeze for up to 3 months, or give it to a friend!

ON-THE-GO  
**SNACKS**



# EASY CANNED FRUIT COMPOTE

Fruit compote can be spooned over yogurt, oatmeal, pancakes, or waffles, and it also makes a delicious topping for ice cream!

**Serves: 2-4**

## Ingredients

- 2 cans of fruit (peaches, pears, pineapple, or mixed fruit)
- 1-2 tbsp sugar, brown sugar, or maple syrup
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp cornstarch mixed with 1 tbsp water

## Tools

- Saucepan
- Mixing spoon
- Tablespoon
- Teaspoon
- Can opener

## Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

### 1 Combine

Place the drained canned fruit, sweetener, spices, and lemon juice into a saucepan.

Simmer: Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently.

### 2 Reduce & Thicken

Reduce heat to low and let it simmer for 5-10 minutes, until the fruit is heated through and the syrup reduces to your desired consistency.

### 3 Finish

Finish: Remove from heat and stir in vanilla extract if using.



### 4 Store/Serve

Serve warm over yogurt, pancakes, or ice cream, or cool completely and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to one week.

### Tips for Success

Best Canned Fruits: Peaches, pears, pineapple, and cherries work well.

Reduce Waste: Use some of the syrup from the can instead of water if you want a sweeter, thicker base, but be careful not to make it too runny.

### Add ons/ substitutes

Add dried cranberries, raisins, or chopped nuts for texture.





# NO-BAKE OATMEAL COOKIES

Soft, chewy, and delicious!

**Serves: ~20**

## Ingredients

- ½ cup peanut butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tsp cocoa (optional)
- 1 tsp vanilla (optional)
- 3 cups quick oats

## Tools

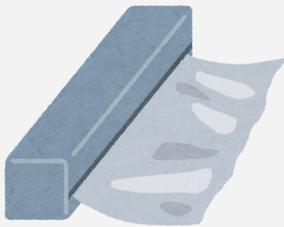
- Spoon
- Aluminium foil
- Spatula
- Pan

## Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for baking.*

1

- Place a baking sheet or piece of aluminum foil out on the counter. You'll be scooping out the cookies on to this to let dry once they're finished cooking.



2

- Turn on your stove to medium heat.
- In a saucepan, mix in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup salted butter, 2 cups white sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cocoa.

3

- Stir to combine and cook until consistency has reached a full boil.

4



- Remove from heat, immediately add in vanilla, peanut butter and quick oats.
- Stir mixture until well combined then, using a medium cookie scoop drop mixture onto baking sheet or foil.

5

- Let cookies sit for about 20 minutes or until the cookies have hardened and you can pick them up off of the aluminum foil and serve.





# PEANUT BUTTER + JELLY GRANOLA BARS

A fun, homemade twist on a classic sandwich.

**Serves: 12 bars**

## Ingredients

- 3 cups rolled oats (or 2 cups oats and 1 cup Rice Krispies)
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ½ cup jelly or jam
- ¼ cup hot water
- ¼ tsp salt
- Butter or vegetable oil
- Additions (optional): nuts, coconut, dried fruit

## Tools

- Baking pan
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Large mixing bowl
- Small pot
- Stirring spoon or spatula
- Knife
- Cutting board

## Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for baking.*

### 1 Heat oven & butter pan

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- Grease a baking pan (about 8" × 11") with butter or oil.
- Put the oats into a large mixing bowl. Add any additional dry ingredients at this time.

### 2 Cook ingredients over low heat

- In a small pot, add:
  - Peanut butter
  - Half of the jelly
  - Hot water
  - Salt
- Heat on low, stirring until smooth and well mixed.

### 3 Mix peanut butter mixture into oats

- Pour the warm peanut butter mixture into the oats.
- Stir well until all the oats are coated and sticky.

### 4 Press mixture into pan

- Press the mixture evenly into the greased pan using a spoon or spatula.
- Spread the remaining jelly over the top.

### 5 Bake for 25 min & cool

- Bake for 25 minutes, until lightly golden around the edges.
- Let cool completely in the pan (about 1 hour).
- Cut into 12 bars and enjoy!



## SIMPLE + HEALTHY FRUIT DIP

A creamy, sweet treat. Great for a dipping sauce for fruit, a spread for crackers, or a topping for pancakes, waffles, or desserts.

**Serves: 2**

### Ingredients

- 1 cup of strawberry yogurt
- 1 tbsp honey (or 1 tbsp sugar)
- ½ cup plain cream cheese (can use low fat)

### Steps

- 1) Put all ingredients into a bowl.
- 2) Mix well
- 3) Serve with fresh cut fruits of choice



# CREAMY RICE PUDDING

A creamy, comforting dessert made with rice, milk, and a touch of sweetness.

**Serves: 2**

## Ingredients

- 1 cup of uncooked short or long grain rice
- 1 tbsp canned fruit per serving
- 4 cups dairy or non-dairy milk
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of salt
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla extract

## Tools

- Large mixing bowl
- Large pot with lid
- Large frying pan/wok
- Colander
- Kitchen knives
- Chopping boards
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon or
- Spatula
- Can opener

# Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

## 1 Cook

- Place rice into a large saucepan and add milk. (1 minute)
- Add the sugar and salt. (1 minute)



## 2 Simmer

- Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium high heat, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula. (10 minutes)



## 3 Wait

- Reduce heat to maintain simmer and cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, for about 20- 22 minutes or until rice is tender and mixture has thickened. (20-22 minutes)



## 4 Add Toppings

- Remove from the heat and add in the vanilla extract and butter if using. Taste and add more sugar as needed. (2 minutes) Now is where you would add any substitutions or extra ingredients

## 5 Cool & Serve

- Rice pudding will thicken as it cools. Thin out with more milk if needed. (optional cooling period)
- Top with canned fruit mixture. Serve warm or cold.



## Add ons/ substitutes

- 1 tbsp butter (optional)
- Peanut butter
- Cinnamon



# ENERGY BITES

Quickly throw these together for a tasty, filling on-the-go snack!

**Serves: 1 dozen bites**

## Ingredients

- ½ cup peanut butter
- 1 cup rolled oats
- ⅓ cup honey
- Optional: ¼ of each, chocolate chips, coconut, seeds and nuts, raisins, dates

## Tools

- Bowl
- Mixing spoon

## Before you start . . .

*Collect all the ingredients and tools you need. Make sure your workspace is clean and ready for cooking.*

### 1 Add All Ingredients

- Add all ingredients together in a medium sized bowl.

### 2 Mix together

- Mix together until it starts sticking together.
- You may need to add more honey or peanut butter for it to stick together.

### 3 Roll into balls

- Roll into 1 inch balls (approx.).
- It should not be wet or super crumbly, just perfect enough for a ball to form when squeeze together.

### 4 Store/Serve

- You can eat these right away and store the extras for later!
- Wrap these individually in saran wrap, or put in a Tupperware or ziplock bag.
- Consume within 5 days.

### Add ons/ substitutes

- You can add protein powder if available to you if you want an extra-protein filled snack. Just be sure to add more peanut butter or honey.



# HOW TO COOK...





# COOK RICE

The perfect recipe for soft and fluffy rice!

Serves: 4

**Pro-tip!** Always remember the rice to water ratio is 1:2

## Ingredients

- 2 cups long-grain white, brown, or wild rice
- 4 cups water (or stock, vegetable juice, or coconut milk for extra flavour)
- ½ tsp salt

## Tools

- Medium pot with a tight-fitting lid (or a plate)
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Spoon
- Fork

### 1 Boil the water

- Pour the water (or chosen liquid) into a medium pot and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat

### 2 Add rice and salt

- Stir in the rice and salt. The water will stop boiling briefly. Wait until it starts boiling again

### 3 Turn heat down

- Immediately lower the heat to the lowest setting
- Cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid or a plate

### 4 Cook without peeking

- White rice: 15 minutes
- Brown or wild rice: 35 minutes
- Do not lift the lid while it cooks

### 5 Remove from heat

- When time is up, remove the pot from heat and let it sit, still covered, for 5 minutes
- Use a fork to gently fluff the rice before serving

### Tips for leftovers

- Keep in the fridge for up to 3 days. Reheat with a splash of water
- Leftover rice works best to make fried-rice or rice pudding
- Soup: Stir in precooked rice to avoid a starchy soup

# COOK DRIED BEANS

This is for dried beans only. Canned beans are already cooked

Serves: 3



**Pro-tip!** 1 cup dried beans = 3 cups cooked beans

## Ingredients

- 1 cup (200 g) dried beans (any variety)
- Water
- Salt, to taste

## Tools

- Large pot with lid
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Colander (strainer)
- Spoon

### 1 Soak the beans

(optional but recommended)

- Place beans in a large bowl or pot. Cover with plenty of water. Let them soak overnight (8–12 hours)
- The next day, drain the soaking water and rinse the beans thoroughly
- **No time to soak?**
  - Cover beans with water in a large pot. Bring to a boil for 10 minutes
  - Drain the water and proceed to the next step.

### 2 Cook the beans

- Put the beans in a large pot and cover with fresh water
- Bring to a boil over medium heat
- Reduce the heat so the beans boil gently
- Cover the pot with a lid slightly ajar (to prevent boiling over)
- Smaller, newer beans: cook for 1–2 hours
- Older, larger beans: cook up to 4 hours

### 3 Monitor and simmer

- Check beans every 30 minutes.
- Add more water if beans become uncovered

#### Tips

- If making refried beans, or soups/stews, slightly overcooked beans are fine
- To maintain bean shape, watch closely as they near tenderness

### 4 Add salt

- Once tender, drain the beans
- Add salt to taste (beans need a fair amount!)

### Tips for leftovers

- Store cooked beans in the fridge for up to 5 days
- Freeze beans in portions for up to 3 months
- Use leftover beans in soups, stews, salads, or mashed for spreads and dips.



# BOILED EGGS

## Ingredients

- Eggs (any number you like)
- Water
- Ice (for cooling, optional)

## Tools

- Medium pot
- Large slotted spoon
- Bowl for ice water
- Timer

### 1 Boil water

- Fill a medium pot with enough water to cover the eggs by 1 inch.
- Bring it to a rolling boil over medium-high heat.

### 2 Add the eggs

- Use a large slotted spoon to gently lower the eggs into the boiling water.

### 3 Cook the eggs

- Hard-boiled: 11 minutes
- Soft-boiled: 6 minutes

### 4 Cool the eggs

- Immediately transfer the eggs to a bowl of cold or ice water.
- Let them sit until the shells are cold to the touch.

### 5 Serve or store

- Peel and eat, or
- Keep in their shells in the fridge for up to 1 week.

### Tips

- Gently lowering the eggs with a slotted spoon helps prevent cracking.
- For easier peeling, let the eggs sit in ice water for at least 5 minutes.

# COOK PASTA



Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- 2 L water
- ½ tbsp salt
- 1 cup (225 g) dried pasta

## Tools

- Large pot
- Spoon for stirring
- Colander for draining
- Measuring cups and spoons

### 1 Boil water

- Fill a large pot with water and bring it to a boil over high heat.
- Stir in the salt until it dissolves.

### 2 Add the pasta

- Carefully add the pasta to the boiling water.
- Stir a few times to prevent the noodles from sticking together.

### 3 Cook the pasta

- Cook according to the package instructions, stirring occasionally, until:
  - Al dente (slightly firm), or
  - Softer, depending on your preference.

### 4 Drain the pasta

- For hot pasta: Drain using a colander and toss immediately with your chosen sauce.
- For pasta salad: Drain and rinse with cold water for about 1 minute, stirring until cooled.

### 5 Storing Leftovers

- Refrigerate in an airtight container for 3–5 days.
- Freeze for up to 3 months.

### Tips

- Stirring occasionally prevents the pasta from sticking.
- Use plenty of water so the pasta cooks evenly.
- Salt the water to enhance flavor.

# COOK POTATOES



**Boiled or roasted potatoes:** Serves 4

**Mashed potatoes:** Serves 4–6

## Ingredients

- 6–8 medium size potatoes
- Water
- 2–3 Tbsp olive oil or melted butter
- Salt, to taste
- 1–2 cups of milk or cream

## Tools

- Medium or large pot
- Baking sheet (for roasting)
- Knife and cutting board
- Peeler (optional)
- Fork or potato masher
- Spoon for stirring
- Measuring cups and spoons

### 1 Boiling Potatoes

- Peel (optional) and cut potatoes into evenly sized pieces.
- Place potatoes in a pot and cover with cold water. Add 1 tsp salt.
- Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Reduce heat and simmer until tender (about 15–20 minutes for chunks).
- Drain and serve, or mash if desired.

### 2 Roasting Potatoes

- Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
- Cut potatoes into evenly sized pieces. Toss with olive oil, salt, and optional herbs.
- Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet.
- Roast for 25–35 minutes, flipping halfway, until golden brown and crispy.
- Serve hot.

### 3 Mashed Potatoes

- Boil potatoes as in Step 1.
- Drain and return potatoes to the pot.
- Mash with a potato masher or fork.
- Add butter or olive oil, a splash of milk or cream, and salt to taste.
- Mix until smooth and creamy. Serve warm.

## Tips

- For even cooking, cut potatoes into similar sizes.
- Use starchy potatoes (like Russets) for fluffy mashed potatoes, and waxy potatoes (like Yukon Gold) for roasting.
- Leftover mashed or roasted potatoes can be refrigerated for 3–4 days or frozen for up to 3 months.

# CONVERSION & COOKING CHART

## DRY MEASUREMENTS

				
½ oz	1 tbsp	⅙ C	15 g	-
1 oz	2 tbsp	⅛ C	28 g	-
2 oz	4 tbsp	¼ C	57 g	-
3 oz	6 tbsp	⅓ C	85 g	-
4 oz	8 tbsp	½ C	115 g	¼ lb
8 oz	16 tbsp	1 C	227 g	½ lb
12 oz	24 tbsp	1½ C	340 g	¾ lb
16 oz	32 tbsp	2 C	455 g	1 lb



### Spoons

1 tbsp  
3 tsp  
½ oz  
15 mL



### Butter

1 stick  
½ cup  
¼ lb

## LIQUID MEASUREMENTS

						
1 oz	6 tsp	2 tbsp	30 mL	⅛ C	-	-
2 oz	12 tsp	4 tbsp	60 mL	¼ C	-	-
2½ oz	16 tsp	5 tbsp	80 mL	⅓ C	-	-
4 oz	24 tsp	8 tbsp	120 mL	½ C	-	-
5½ oz	32 tsp	11 tbsp	160 mL	⅔ C	-	-
6 oz	36 tsp	12 tbsp	177 mL	¾ C	-	-
8 oz	48 tsp	16 tbsp	240 mL	1 C	½ pt	¼ qt
16 oz	96 tsp	32 tbsp	470 mL	2 C	1 pt	½ qt
32 oz	192 tsp	64 tbsp	950 mL	4 C	2 pt	1 qt

### Egg Timer

Soft - 5 min  
Medium - 7 min  
Hard - 9 min

### Dash / Pinch

⅙ tsp ⅛ tsp



### Herbs

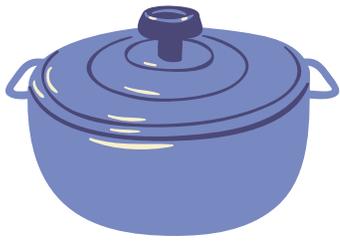
1 tsp dried =  
1 tbsp fresh

## OVEN TEMPERATURES

°F	225	250	275	300	325	350	375	400	425	450	475	500
°C	110	120	140	150	170	180	190	200	220	230	240	260

Melissa's SOUTHERN STYLE KITCHEN

[melissassouthernstylekitchen.com](http://melissassouthernstylekitchen.com)



THANK YOU  
FOR READING AND ENGAGING WITH OUR

SIMPLE MEALS  
& SHARED CONNECTIONS:

# COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

We hope these recipes leave you with a full belly  
and a happy heart!



This cookbook was created by:  
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