

Rice 101: How to Cook, Store and Reheat Rice



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Article

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New to cooking? Dipping your toes into the world of rice? Ready to bring something new to the table? You're in the right place. Rice is as easy to cook as it is to eat — not to mention convenient, nutritious and full of variety and flavor. Here's everything you need to know about how to cook and store rice.

[How to Cook Rice](#)

[Stovetop](#)

[Pressure Cooker](#)

[Microwave](#)

[Oven](#)

[Pasta Style](#)

[Rice Cooking Tips](#)

[Rice Nutrition](#)

[How to Store Rice](#)

[How to Reheat Rice](#)

How Do I Make Rice?

The instructions on the package are a good place to start, but there are all kinds of ways to prepare rice — dry rice is as versatile as it is affordable. Try experimenting with different methods to find the ones that best fit your lifestyle and culinary practice.

How Do I Cook Dry Rice on the Stovetop?

You may be familiar with this tried-and-true method — no fancy equipment is required. Simply add rice and water to a pot and bring to a boil to get started.

Variety	Servings	Rice (cups)	Water (cups)	Cook Time (min)	Set-aside Time (min)
Ben’s Original™ Long Grain White Rice	4	1	2 ¼	20	5
Ben’s Original™ Long Grain White Rice	8	2	4 ¼	20	5
Ben’s Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	4	1	2	25	-
Ben’s Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	8	2	4	25	-

Equipment needed:

- Lidded pot
- Measuring cups

Cooking tips:

A few factors can affect how quickly rice absorbs water with this method. Tighter-fitting lids and lower simmer temperatures sometimes result in water remaining in the pot after the recommended cook time. Turning off the heat and allowing the rice to rest in the covered pot for an additional five minutes should help it absorb the excess water.

Constantly peeking or using poorly fitting lids may lead to too much water evaporating, resulting in crispy rice that sticks to the bottom. If you notice this happening, you can correct it by adding a few tablespoons of hot water to the pot to compensate for the steam loss.

Instructions:

1. Combine rice and water in a pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Add butter and salt if desired.
2. Reduce heat to medium or medium-low. Cover and simmer for the time suggested above or until most of the water is absorbed.
3. Set aside and let stand for an additional five minutes to absorb any excess water. Fluff with a fork and serve.

How Do I Cook Dry Rice in an Instant Pot®?

Preparing rice in a pressure cooker couldn't be easier; simply put rice and water in your Instant Pot® and tap the "rice" button — and add rice to the ever-growing list of meals your handy kitchen device can prepare.

Variety	Rice	Water	Cook Setting Time	Time	Pressure Release
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	1	1.25	Rice	Auto	Natural, 10 min
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	2	2.25	Rice	Auto	Natural, 10 min
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	1	1.25	Rice	Auto	Natural, 10 min
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	2	2.25	Rice	Auto	Natural, 10 min

Cooking tips:

- The preset "rice" function on the Instant Pot® is designed for parboiled rice. Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice and Whole Grain Brown Rice will cook perfectly using this setting. Other varieties of rice may require time to be set according to the individual variety of rice.
- Regardless of which variety of rice you're cooking in the pressure cooker, the same rice-to-water ratio will apply. Use an equal volume of rice and water plus $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water. For example, if you're cooking 1 cup of dry rice, add 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of water to the pressure cooker. For 2 cups of dry rice, add 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups water; for 3 cups rice, add 3

¼ cups water, and so on.

- A typical medium-sized pressure cooker requires at least 1 cup of rice, but no more than the volume of rice and water that fills the inner pot halfway. Filling beyond halfway could lead to an overflow as the rice expands during cooking.
- 1 tablespoon of butter and a pinch of salt per cup of dry rice is optional.

Flavor options:

Buttery Toasted Pressure Cooker Rice:

For more flavorful plain rice, add 1 tablespoon of butter and a pinch of salt per cup of uncooked rice to the pot and use the sauté or brown setting to toast the rice for 4-5 minutes before cooking as directed above.

Savory Pressure Cooker Rice:

To add a meaty richness to your rice, simply replace the water with broth or stock, and cook as above.

Can I Cook Dry Rice in the Microwave?

Yes! This convenient method is especially useful if you need to cook a small amount of rice or don't have access to a stovetop. Whether you want to make and eat your rice straight from the same container or you're just looking for an easy way to make perfectly fluffy rice, give this method a try.

Variety	Servings	Rice (cups)	Water (cups)	Cook Time (min)	Set-aside Time (min)
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	4	1	2	14-16	5
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	4	1	2	15-18	5

Equipment needed:

- Microwave-safe dish, at least 1 ½ quarts in size
- Lid or plastic wrap
- Measuring cup

Cooking tip:

Microwave power and performance varies widely, so take a flexible approach when you first attempt this until you get to know how your microwave will perform. Because of the risk of boil-over, we don't recommend cooking more than 1 cup of dry rice at a time using this method.

Instructions:

1. Combine rice and water in the dish and stir. Add butter and salt if desired. Microwave uncovered on high power for 10–12 minutes. Check the rice for the appearance of steam holes after 10 minutes and continue cooking, 1 minute at a time, until the steam holes appear.
2. Once the steam holes are visible, cover the dish with a microwave-safe lid or plastic wrap with a small vent hole. Continue heating for 4 minutes.
3. Allow the dish to remain in the microwave, still covered, for 5 minutes. Carefully remove from the microwave, fluff with a fork and enjoy.

Bonus cooking tip: [Ben's Original™ Ready Rice™](#) products make cooking simple, delicious rice in the microwave even easier. Featuring a microwaveable pouch that eliminates prep and cleanup, Ben's Original™ Ready Rice™ offers all your favorite rice ready to eat in just 90 seconds.

How Do I Cook Rice in the Oven?

Cooking rice in the oven simply requires an oven-safe pan and something to cover the pan. If you're cooking in bulk or have a little extra time on your hands, preparing rice in the oven may be the method for you.

Variety	Servings (1 cup cooked)	Rice (cups)	Water (cups)	Cook Time (min)	Set-aside Time (min)
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	8	2	4	35	5
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	16	4	8	35	5

Variety	Servings (1 cup cooked)	Rice (cups)	Water (cups)	Cook Time (min)	Set-aside Time (min)
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	8	2	3 ¾	35	5
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	16	4	7 ½	35	5

Equipment needed:

- Oven-safe pan
- Lid or aluminum foil
- Measuring cup

Cooking tip:

This method is most useful for preparing larger quantities of rice, or for situations when you have many things cooking on your stovetop or have a little more time to let the rice cook uninterrupted.

Instructions:

1. Combine rice and **hot** (nearly boiling) water (190 F) in a shallow, oven-safe pan. Add butter and salt if desired. Stir.
2. Cover and bake in a 350 F oven according to the chart above, or until most of the water is absorbed.
3. Remove from oven, fluff with fork and enjoy.

What's the Best Way to Prevent Burning Rice?

Cooking rice using the same technique as pasta, called the excess-water method, ensures you will never burn a pot of rice again. Plus, there's no need to measure the rice; you can make as much or little as you like.

Variety	Cook Time (min)
Ben's Original™ Long Grain White Rice	20
Ben's Original™ Whole Grain Brown Rice	20

Equipment needed:

- Large pot
- Fine mesh colander

Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. This should be at least six times more water than the amount of rice you plan to cook, or more.
2. Add the desired amount of rice to the boiling water. Reduce heat to a low boil and cook for time specified, until the grains are tender.
3. Drain in a fine mesh colander for one minute or return to the hot pot to remove excess water. Fluff with a fork and stir in butter if desired.

Tips to Cook Rice Like a Pro

Use these tips to prepare delicious rice, every time.

- Low and slow heat while cooking helps protect rice grains from splitting.
- Don't peek when cooking your pot of rice. Leaving the lid on throughout the cooking process keeps the steam inside to gently cook the grains.
- Avoid stirring rice as it cooks. Stirring rice will release excess starch into the water and can result in a stickier pot of rice.
- Set-aside time, sometimes indicated in rice-cooking instructions, helps equalize the moisture within the grains, making them tender yet firm and separate. Set-aside time also makes for easier cleanup by loosening any grains stuck to the bottom of the pan.
- Here are some easy ways to add a special touch and subtle flavor to your rice.

- Cooking with a pinch of salt and a tablespoon of butter per cup of dry rice brings out a subtle richness and highlights other flavors in the foods it is served with.
- Toss a few whole cumin seeds, coriander pods, chili flakes, star anise, cardamom pods, cinnamon sticks or other spices into the dry pan and toast for 30 to 60 seconds before cooking your rice; then leave them in the pot while the rice is cooked as usual for a flavor infusion.
- Naturally enhance the visual appeal of your rice dish by adding a small amount of naturally colorful ingredients. Try adding a pinch of turmeric, saffron threads, annatto seeds or even flower petals from clean dandelions to brighten up your rice dishes.

Is Rice Good for You?

Nutritionally, rice is hard to beat. This grain is not only delicious and affordable, but also a balanced part of a healthy diet.

- Brown rice is a whole grain. The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that at least half of the grains we eat should be whole grains. A 1-cup serving of [Ben's Original™ 100% whole grain products](#) nearly meets the USDA daily requirements of three servings of whole grains.
- Whole-grain brown rice is rich in beneficial nutrients, like antioxidants, phytonutrients, vitamins and minerals — and is a natural source of fiber for a complete diet. The fiber and nutrients in the bran layer of brown rice promote digestive health, providing a favorable environment for healthy gut microbes.
- It's not necessary to rinse good-quality, long-grain rice purchased at major U.S. grocery stores before cooking. In fact, washing milled white rice can reduce the amount of some important nutrients, such as iron, folate and thiamin.
- Rice is a naturally gluten-free and allergen-free food, is highly digestible and is a natural source of amino acids — plus a good source of complex carbohydrates for sustained energy.
- Parboiled rice has been partially cooked by the manufacturer to ensure the highest quality and nutrition and consistent cook times. This type of rice will be less sticky and more separate than non-parboiled rice.
- All [Ben's Original™ parboiled long-grain white rice](#) and flavored rice products are enriched with iron and B vitamins, including thiamin, folic acid and niacin. Plus, they naturally have minerals like phosphorus, magnesium and potassium.

- Rice is naturally low in fat and saturated fat. It has 0 g trans fats and is cholesterol free.
- Rice is well tolerated by dogs and makes a great addition to pet food.

Can I Store and Reheat Cooked Rice?

Absolutely — cooking rice for later use is a great way to save both time and money. Cooked rice easily stores in the refrigerator for use in a wide variety of dishes, such as [fried rice](#), [casseroles](#), [soups](#), frittatas, rice bowls, burritos, [rice pudding](#) and more.

Using top-quality parboiled rice has the added benefit of preventing cooked rice from turning into a sticky glob. Ben's Original™ parboiled rice remains separate and loose for storage and reheating, ensuring Perfect Every Time® results.

How Do I Store Cooked Rice?

Always cool and then store unused portions of cooked rice in a closed — preferably shallow — container in the refrigerator or freezer. Properly storing cooked rice prevents the growth of harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

Never store cooked rice at room temperature unless it has been commercially prepared in a sealed package by the manufacturer for this purpose. Discard any rice left sitting out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Refrigerator storage: Cool cooked rice at room temperature for 20–30 minutes. Place into a tightly covered container or sealed plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

Freezer storage: Spread out cool cooked rice evenly on a baking sheet. Place in the freezer until completely frozen, about 1 hour. Remove frozen rice, breaking any large clumps apart, and transfer to an airtight container or plastic bag. Quickly return frozen rice to the freezer and store for up to 3 months.

How Do I Reheat Cooked Rice?

Cooked rice that's been chilled is best reheated with a small amount of water added; this refreshes the starches that become firm when chilled. For food safety, never reheat cooked rice more than once and be sure to reheat all leftover/precooked food to an internal temperature of 165 F.

Microwave reheating frozen rice: Add about 1 tablespoon of water per 1 cup of cooked rice to a covered microwavable bowl and heat for about 4–5 minutes, until thoroughly heated. Larger quantities of frozen rice will require longer heating times. Carefully remove from microwave and fluff with a fork.

Microwave reheating refrigerated rice: Add about 1 tablespoon of water per 1 cup of cooked rice to a covered microwavable bowl and heat for about 2 ½ to 3 minutes, until

thoroughly heated. Larger quantities of refrigerated rice will require longer heating times. Carefully remove from microwave and fluff with fork.

Stovetop reheating refrigerated rice: Add rice and 1 tablespoon water per 1 cup of cooked rice to a saucepan or skillet. Cover and heat for 2–3 minutes, until the water simmers and rice is heated thoroughly.

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