

How to Cook Rice Without Guessing

Fluffy rice is a useful starting point for bowls, stir-fries, and simple dinners. This guide is specifically for regular long-grain white rice.

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS • PREP 5 MIN • COOK 15-20 MIN • REST 10 MIN

Ingredients

- 1 cup regular long-grain white rice
- 1 3/4 cups water
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt
- 1 teaspoon butter or oil, optional

Tools: Fine-mesh strainer, saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, measuring cups, fork.

How to Tell It’s Ready

The grains should be tender and separate, with no puddle of water at the bottom.

Troubleshooting

Stirring repeatedly can make rice sticky. High heat can scorch the bottom before the rice is tender.

How to Make It

1. Rinse the rice. Rinse in a fine-mesh strainer under cool water until the water is less cloudy. Drain well.
2. Measure and heat. Combine rice, water, salt, and optional butter in the saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
3. Cover and reduce the heat. Stir once, put on the lid, and turn the heat to low. Cook at a very gentle simmer for 15-20 minutes. Avoid lifting the lid or stirring.
4. Check and adjust. The water should be absorbed and the grains tender. If the rice is still firm and dry, add 2 tablespoons hot water, cover, and cook on low for 3-5 minutes.
5. Rest and fluff. Remove the covered pan from the heat. Let it stand for 10 minutes, then fluff gently with a fork.

Jane’s Note

Keep the lid on while the rice rests. Those last few minutes help finish the texture without more heat.

Use the package ratio if it differs. Jasmine, basmati, brown, parboiled, and instant rice need their own water ratios and timing. Refrigerate leftover rice promptly in shallow containers; do not leave the pot on the counter to cool for hours.

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