

## Whole Grain Cooking Guide

Whole grains have been a central element of the human diet since early civilization. Humans ceased being hunter-gatherers and settled down into farming communities when they were able to cultivate grain crops. People living in these communities—on all continents—had lean, strong bodies. In the Americas, corn was the staple grain. In India and Asia, it was rice. In Africa, people ate sorghum. In the Middle East, they made pita bread, tabouli and couscous. In Europe, corn, millet, wheat, rice, pasta, dark breads and even beer were considered health-providing foods. In Scotland, oats were a staple food. In Russia, they ate buckwheat or kasha. Whole grains are an excellent source of nutrition, as they contain essential enzymes, iron, dietary fiber, vitamin E and B-complex vitamins. Because the body absorbs grain slowly, they provide sustained and high-quality energy.

The quickest way to create great grains is to experiment and find what works for you. Here are basic directions:

1. Measure the grain then rinse in cold water using a fine mesh strainer.
2. Optional: soak grains for one to eight hours to soften, increase digestibility, and eliminate phytic acid. Drain grains and discard the soaking water.
3. Add grains to recommended amount of water and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for the suggested amount of time.

1 cup Grain	Water	Cooking Time	Contains Gluten?
Brown rice	2 cups	45-60 minutes	no
Buckwheat (aka kasha)	2 cups	20-30 minutes	no
Oats (whole groats)	3 cups	75-90 minutes	yes, unless certified GF
Oatmeal (rolled oats)	2 cups	20-30 minutes	yes, unless certified GF
Amaranth	3 cups	30 minutes	no
Barley (pearled)	2-3 cups	60 minutes	yes
Barley (hulled)	2-3 cups	90 minutes	yes
Bulgur (cracked wheat)	2 cups	20 minutes	yes
Cornmeal (aka polenta)	3 cups	20 minutes	no
Couscous	1 cup	5 minutes	yes
Kamut	3 cups	90 minutes	yes
Millet	2 cups	30 minutes	no
Quinoa	2 cups	15-20 minutes	no
Rye berries	3 cups	2 hours	yes
Spelt	3 cups	2 hours	yes
Wheat berries	3 cups	60 minutes	yes
Wild rice	4 cups	60 minutes	no

All liquid measures and times are approximate. Cooking length depends on how strong the heat is. It's a good idea, especially for beginners, to lift the lid and check the water level halfway through cooking and toward the end, making sure there is still enough water to not scorch the grains. Be sure to taste the grains to see if they are fully cooked or starting to burn. Cooking larger grains like brown rice, barley and berries in a pressure cooker speeds up cooking time and creates softer grains.

Note that the texture of grains can be changed by boiling the water before adding the grains. This will keep the grains separated and prevent a mushy consistency. For a porridge-like consistency, boil the grain and liquid together.