04 - Cooking Rice

Rice is the primary calorie source in this plan. It is simple to cook, stores almost indefinitely, and pairs with beans or lentils to form a complete nutritional base.

What You Need

- White rice (long grain, medium grain, or jasmine all work — avoid instant rice for storage)
- Water
- A pot with a tight fitting lid
- Salt
- Heat source

Water Requirements

Amount Dry	Water	Yield Cooked
1 cup	2 cups	~2 cups
2 cups	4 cups	~4 cups
4 cups	8 cups	~8 cups

> **Note:** These ratios are for white rice. Brown rice requires more water (2.5 cups per cup dry) and longer cooking time (40 to 45 minutes). White rice is recommended for storage because it cooks faster and stores longer.

How to Cook

1. Measure rice
2. Rinse once in cold water if water supply allows — this removes surface starch and prevents clumping

3. Add rice and water to pot
4. Bring to a full boil
5. Reduce to the lowest simmer your heat source allows
6. Cover tightly with a lid — **do not lift the lid during cooking**
7. Cook 18 to 20 minutes
8. Remove from heat and let sit covered for 5 minutes — this step matters, it finishes the texture
9. Fluff with a fork or spoon and season with salt

The lid rule is important. Every time you lift it you release steam and extend cook time, wasting fuel and water.

Adding Fat

Add one tablespoon of tallow or other cooking fat per person to the water before cooking begins. The fat distributes through the rice as it cooks, adds the dietary fat your body needs, and gives the finished rice a richer texture and flavor. This is the simplest and most effective way to work fat into a rice meal.

Alternatively, serve rice with fat added to the beans instead — whichever is more convenient for how you are cooking that day.

[ADD-INS]

Add to the water before cooking:

- Tallow or cooking fat — always if available, add it here
- Salt — always
- Garlic, minced or crushed — cook briefly in the fat first if you have a moment, then add water and rice
- A pinch of turmeric — turns the rice yellow, adds mild flavor and nutritional value
- Tomato, finely chopped — replace half the water with tomato and cook as normal

Fold in gently after cooking:

- Green onions, chopped — fold in right after fluffing
- Any fresh soft herb from the garden
- Fresh spinach or chard — fold in while rice is still hot, the residual heat wilts it in about 60 seconds
- A small squeeze of lemon or lime if available

Fuel Saving Tips

- A tight lid is the single most important fuel saving tool for rice
- **Retained heat method:** Bring water to a boil, add rice, return to boil, cover tightly, then immediately wrap the entire pot in a blanket, jacket, or sleeping bag. Let sit 25 to 30 minutes. The rice finishes cooking in the trapped heat with zero additional fuel. This works reliably and produces good rice.
- Cook a full day's rice supply in one batch — rice reheats quickly and can be eaten at room temperature if needed
- Once the pot is at a full boil with the lid on, the heat can be reduced dramatically — you only need enough flame to maintain a gentle simmer

Batch Cooking Reference

Dry Rice	Feeds (per meal)	Cook Time
1 cup	1 to 2 people	18–20 min
2 cups	3 to 4 people	18–20 min
4 cups	6 to 8 people	20–22 min

> Larger batches take slightly longer to come to a boil but cook in roughly the same time once simmering.

When Rice Goes Wrong

Problem	Likely Cause	Fix
Rice is mushy	Too much water or cooked too long	Use less water next time, check at 15 minutes
Rice is still hard	Not enough water or heat too low	Add a small splash of water, cover, cook 5 more minutes
Rice is stuck to the bottom	Heat too high	Scrape and serve — the stuck layer is edible and can be crisped intentionally as a variation

Problem	Likely Cause	Fix
Rice is clumpy	Lid lifted too often or not rinsed	Rinse before cooking and leave the lid alone

> **Stuck bottom layer:** In many cultures this is considered the best part of the pot. Crispy stuck rice is edible, flavorful, and not a failure.

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Revision #1
Created 2026-05-01 04:51:08 UTC by Danicus
Updated 2026-05-01 04:51:22 UTC by Danicus