



Ready, Set,

RICE!

**A RICE COOKING
PLAYBOOK**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
THE USA RICE FEDERATION



WHY *Rice?*

No matter what your operation, don't underestimate rice. For such a tiny ingredient, rice offers big potential on any menu. Because:

- Rice is already a staple in many cuisines; in fact, two-thirds of the world's population enjoys rice on a regular basis.

- Rice complements food and acts as a delicious flavor carrier. Plus, it balances out spiciness like a champ!

- Rice retains moisture, increasing a food's irresistibility. Who could resist that?

- Rice is naturally gluten-free, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free, and is the least allergenic of all the grains.

- Rice adds value on both sides of the house. It's filling and satisfying from a guest's perspective, and amazingly affordable and easy to store for an operator.

And if all these reasons aren't enough, this sustainable grain is also very easy to cook, and we'll show you how right here. All you have to do is choose the kind of rice you want to work into your menus, and let this book guide you through the best cooking practices.

**ALL U.S.-
GROWN RICE
IS GMO-FREE!**



A QUICK RICE Lesson

First things first. Before we dig into all the cooking details, it helps to understand the anatomy of a rice grain.

Rice is the edible seed from a type of grass called *Oryza sativa*. Fresh from the field, this grain is covered in a very tough hull, also called a husk, which needs to be removed before the rice can be eaten. All rice is milled at least once to remove this protective covering.

Without the husk, rice at this stage is classified as 100% whole grain, also known as brown rice. Whole grain (brown) rice is full of vitamins, minerals, oil, phytonutrients, protein, and fiber. Here's what it looks like.

endosperm

The largest and starchiest part of a rice kernel, and what makes rice taste so good.

bran

The outer layer of whole grain rice. It ranges in color from tan to red to purple to deep, dark brown or black, depending on the variety.

germ

The germ, the reproductive part of the kernel, is very small but also highly nutritious.

AMERICAN WHITE RICE IS ENRICHED WITH EXTRA VITAMINS TO REPLACE THE NUTRIENTS THAT ARE LOST IN PROCESSING.

But it doesn't stop there. Most rice goes through even more processing to remove the germ and bran, leaving only the endosperm. This second milling gives us what we know and love as white rice.

Whole grain (brown) rice has a chewy texture, a nutty flavor, and takes longer to cook than white rice. It is sought after for its dense nutrient content.

Milled (white) rice is fluffy, moist, and tender. Depending on the variety, it's also delicately and uniquely fragrant.

Varieties OF RICE

There are more than 120,000 kinds of rice in the world, all uniquely identified by degree of milling, the size of the grain, how much starch it contains, and its fragrance and flavor. Here we will focus on the most common types of rice, which are separated into long, medium, and short grain varieties.



long grain

COMMON VARIETIES

The vast majority of long grain rice produced is traditional firm-cooking long grain, but there are many specialty types of long grain rice, like basmati, jasmine, and purple rice.

CHARACTERISTICS

These longer, slender grains remain fluffy, firm, and separate when cooked, and naturally have a drier texture due to a lower starch content. (Jasmine rice is an exception; it cooks softer and stickier than other long grain rice.)

PERFECT FOR

Pilafs | Side Dishes | Grain Salads
Southern Recipes | Stir-Frys

LONG GRAIN RICE IS THE MOST COMMONLY CONSUMED AND PRODUCED RICE TYPE. ALMOST ALL LONG GRAIN RICE IS GROWN IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.



medium grain

COMMON VARIETIES

Calrose (California), tropical japonica (Southern U.S.), and arborio are the most popular and easiest to find.

CHARACTERISTICS

Shorter and plumper grains with a moist, chewy texture. Medium grain rice tends to stick together when cooked. Arborio rice releases a creamy starch when slowly simmered.

PERFECT FOR

Risotto | Soups | Sushi

CALIFORNIA-GROWN MEDIUM AND SHORT GRAIN VARIETIES ARE LABELED AS "PREMIUM QUALITY RICE."



short grain

COMMON VARIETIES

Short grain rice is grown mainly in California. Well-known varieties include sweet, or mochi, rice; Koshihikari; Akitakomachi; and others developed in California.

CHARACTERISTICS

The shortest grains of all, these rice types are also the stickiest because of their low percentage of amylose, a specific starch that keeps rice firm. The less amylose in the rice, the stickier it becomes when cooked.

PERFECT FOR

Dishes with a creamy consistency, as well as
Sushi | Rice Pudding | Paella
Asian Recipes

95% OF ALL SUSHI EATEN IN THE U.S. IS MADE WITH SHORT OR MEDIUM GRAIN AMERICAN-GROWN RICE.

WHAT IS CONVERTED (PARBOILED) RICE?

COMMON VARIETIES: In the U.S. all parboiled rice is long grain.

CHARACTERISTICS: A special process in which the husk is left intact, and the rice is precooked and dried allows the nutrients from the bran to penetrate the starchy endosperm, which makes a more nutritious grain. Cooked grains are fluffy and separate, but firmer in texture than conventional cooked rice. Because this rice has more of the bran attached, it takes a little longer to cook. Converted rice absorbs more water, which results in more coverage on the plate as an added benefit.

PERFECT FOR: Longer-cooking items, and dishes that need to stand up for longer periods of time on steam tables, as well as
Stews | Soups | Frozen Products

ALL SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG GRAIN RICE CAN BE WHITE OR BROWN—IT JUST DEPENDS ON THE PROCESSING.

BASIC TIPS FOR *Cooking Rice*

✓ *measure it*

With most of these cooking techniques, perfectly cooked rice relies on accurate measurements of liquid to rice. Always rely on package instructions for the specific rice variety, but in general, use a 2:1 ratio: **2 cups liquid: 1 cup uncooked rice.**

RICE YIELDS:

1 cup uncooked white rice = 3 cups of cooked rice.

1 cup uncooked whole grain (brown) rice = 4 cups of cooked rice.

✓ *season it*

Water is a fantastic way to cook rice, but you can also flavor things up with broth, a splash of wine, herbs, or other seasonings. The rice will happily soak up all that delicious flavor.

✓ *salt it*

As when cooking pasta, add salt to the cooking liquid.

✓ *flavor it*

A small amount of butter or oil can be added to any cooking method for additional richness.

✓ *separate it*

Since every variety of rice has a slightly different cooking time and absorption rate, cook the varieties separately if you're making a blend, mixing them once they're cooked. However, prepackaged rice blends are fine to cook together.

✓ *leave it*

After cooking, let the rice sit covered for 5 to 10 minutes so the steam can penetrate every grain and moisture can distribute evenly. Afterward, fluff the rice with a fork to maximize texture.



STOVETOP *Steaming*

what is it? A precisely measured amount of liquid and rice, covered and simmered until the rice absorbs all of the liquid.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Once you figure out the formula of water to the rice you plan to cook, you can get perfect results every time.
- ✓ Simmering is gentler on the rice, resulting in firmer, more separate grains.

DISADVANTAGES

- ✗ Batch size is limited to the size of the pot.
- ✗ Takes up space on the stove.
- ✗ Larger pots can sometimes cook unevenly, especially if dented.
- ✗ Can require trial and error to perfect the recipe.
- ✗ Scorching and burning is possible with incorrect liquid portions or if the heat is too high.

BEST FOR: All rice varieties, (especially fragrant varieties like basmati or jasmine) and small batches of sushi rice.

HOW TO DO IT: Add measured rice and liquid to a pot. Bring the contents to a boil then reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until the rice absorbs all the liquid.



recipe to try:

[Spicy Thai Rice](#)

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

White rice: 1 cup rice to 2 cups liquid for 15-25 minutes.

Brown rice (Short/Medium): 1 cup rice to 2.25 cups liquid for 30-40 minutes.

Brown rice (Long) and converted rice: 1 cup rice to 2.5 cups liquid for 30-35 minutes.

STOVETOP *Boiling*, AKA THE PASTA METHOD

what is it? This easy technique is simply boiling a large amount of water, adding rice, cooking until the rice is done, and draining off excess water, just like pasta.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ No measuring required, no fussy water-to-rice ratios.

DISADVANTAGES

- ✗ Requires timing and eyeballing to get it right.
- ✗ Takes up space on the stove.
- ✗ Batch size is limited to the size of the pot.
- ✗ Boiling can break longer, more delicate grains of rice.

BEST FOR: Long and medium grain rice, converted rice, brown rice.

DON'T USE WITH: Short grain rice, sticky rice.

HOW TO DO IT: Fill a large pot with a generous amount of water and heat on stovetop over medium-high. Once boiling, add rice and cook until rice is desired consistency. Drain and return to pot, covered but off the heat, to steam before serving.

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

No specific ratio of rice to liquid, but be sure to use a generous amount of water in comparison to the amount of rice you plan to cook.

Cooking time can be anywhere from 15 minutes for white rice to 30-40 minutes for brown rice and converted rice.



recipes to try:

[Shrimp and Rice Patties with Creamy Cilantro Sauce](#)
[Chili Rice Bowl with Chips](#)



recipe to try:

[Thai Chicken & Brown Rice Lettuce Wraps](#)

STOVETOP *Braising*

STOVETOP BRAISING IS AN OPTIONAL STEP THAT CAN HAPPEN BEFORE ANY OTHER COOKING METHOD.

what is it? Involves sautéing uncooked rice and aromatics (vegetables, garlic, herbs) in fat (butter, oil, etc.) before cooking.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Gently toasting the rice enhances the flavor. It's also a crucial step for pillowy pilafs and the creamiest risotto possible. Braising helps long grain rice stay separate and contributes to the silky texture of starchier varieties.

DISADVANTAGES

- ⊘ Uses more ingredients.
- ⊘ Requires some culinary skills.

BEST FOR: All varieties of rice, depending on desired recipe or outcome.

HOW TO DO IT:

Pilaf Method (best for long grain rice varieties)

Sauté uncooked rice in oil or butter over medium heat until lightly toasted and grains are coated in fat. Add liquid, cover, and cook gently over low heat or in the oven until all the liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and let steam, covered, for 5-10 minutes before fluffing.

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

White rice: 1 cup rice to 2 cups liquid for 15-25 minutes.

Brown rice (Short/Medium): 1 cup rice to 2.25 cups liquid for 25-35 minutes.

Risotto Method (best for medium grain rice, like Arborio)

Sauté uncooked rice in oil or butter over medium heat until lightly toasted and grains are coated in fat. Add liquid in small amounts while stirring occasionally, uncovered. This technique will coax the rice to release starch slowly, creating the creamy consistency risotto is famous for.

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

Arborio rice can absorb up to 3 times its volume in liquid, and typically takes 30 minutes to make. It also requires a lot of attention (compared to other methods), due to the required stirring.



recipe to try:
[Vegetarian Paella](#)



recipe to try:
[Butternut Squash and Brown Rice Risotto](#)

OVEN *Baking*

what is it? This easy method is similar to stovetop steaming, using precise measurements of liquid and rice, but takes advantage of the even heat of the oven for cooking.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Even heating due to the full circulation of heat around the pot.
- ✓ Less temptation to lift the lid and release steam or stir.
- ✓ Frees up stovetop space.
- ✓ Good for large quantities of rice, as long as there's room in the oven.

DISADVANTAGES

- ⊘ Oven use may be intimidating for some.
- ⊘ Takes up space in the oven.

BEST FOR: Medium and long grain rice, all brown rice, and converted rice.

NOT GOOD FOR: Sushi rice or other short grain, glutinous varieties.

HOW TO DO IT: Add measured liquid and rice to a hotel pan or pot and seal tightly with foil. Bake at **350°F** until rice absorbs all the liquid, then remove from heat and allow to steam, covered, before serving.

COOKING RATIOS/TIME (IN A 350°F OVEN):

White rice (Short/Medium/Long): 1 cup rice to 2 cups liquid for 25-30 minutes.

Brown rice (Short/Medium/Long) and converted rice: 1 cup rice to 2.25 cups liquid for 30-45 minutes.



recipe to try:
[Chicken and Rice Roll Ups](#)

PRESSURE COOKER / *Instant Pot*[®]

what is it? A pressure cooker speeds up the process of cooking rice, especially whole grain varieties. This hands-free method yields consistent results, using precise measurements of liquid and rice.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Faster than any other method.
- ✓ Easy. Some pressure cookers, like the Instant Pot[®], have a rice cooking function built into the panel.
- ✓ Multipurpose. Can be used for things other than rice cooking.
- ✓ Requires less liquid to cook; steam can't escape during the cooking process.

DISADVANTAGES

- ⊘ Scorching or burning can occur with incorrect liquid proportions.
- ⊘ Batch size can be limited by the size of the pressure cooker.
- ⊘ Newer technology that every kitchen may not have.
- ⊘ Some cookers are more difficult to use than others.

BEST FOR: Long and medium grain white rice, converted rice, and brown rice, as well as short and medium grain starchy rice.

HOW TO DO IT: Simply combine the liquid and rice and pressure cook on the high setting, or the "RICE" setting, following manufacturer's instructions. After cooking, let the pressure reduce naturally for 10 minutes, and then open the pressure cooker to fluff your rice.



recipe to try:

[Instant Pot Chipotle Chicken Rice Bowls](#)

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

All white rice, brown rice, and converted rice:

1 cup rice to 1.25 cups liquid. White rice cooks on high for 5 minutes and brown rice/converted rice for 10 minutes.



SLOW COOKER / *Crock Pot*

what is it? When time isn't an issue, a slow cooker or crock pot is a gentle way to cook rice that requires very little attention.

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Gentle enough for long grains, and slow enough to release the starch of short grains.
- ✓ Very even cooking.
- ✓ Hands-free.
- ✓ Multipurpose. Can be used for things other than rice cooking.
- ✓ Can also be used to heat up leftover rice.

DISADVANTAGES

- ⊘ Slowest of the cooking methods, sometimes 2-3 hours, depending on the type of rice.
- ⊘ Slow cookers retain heat, so rice can go from perfectly cooked to overcooked quickly.
- ⊘ Batch size is limited by the size of the crock pot.
- ⊘ Uneven cooking or scorching in some appliances.

BEST FOR: All types of rice, including sushi/sticky rice (in small batches).

HOW TO DO IT: Combine liquid and rice, cover, and cook on high until desired doneness.



recipe to try:

[Sweet Cherry Almond Breakfast Risotto](#)

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

White rice: 1 cup rice to 1.5 cups liquid for 1.5-2 hours.

Brown rice (Short/Medium): 1 cup rice to 1.75 cups liquid for 2-2.5 hours.

Brown rice (Long) and converted rice: 1 cup rice to 2 cups liquid for 2-3 hours.

RICE *Cooker*

what is it? A staple in kitchens that serve rice on a regular basis, this countertop appliance combines measured water and rice and does the work for you with the press of a button, so you can set it and forget it!

WHY WE LOVE IT

- ✓ Perfect rice every time.
- ✓ No burning or scorching.
- ✓ Automatically stops cooking and switches to “holding” mode for up to 12 hours of perfectly held rice.
- ✓ Self-contained and sealed, no mess.
- ✓ Requires less water because it is a closed system.
- ✓ Can reheat leftover rice. Some units have an actual reheat option, however the keep warm function will also do. Add a tablespoon of water to the cooker along with the rice and wait an hour for the cooker to reheat.

DISADVANTAGES

- ✗ Unable to open cooker during the cooking process.
- ✗ Single-task appliance.
- ✗ Batch size is limited by the size of the cooker.

BEST FOR: All types of rice, especially short grain sushi and sticky rice.

HOW TO DO IT: Combine the measured rice and liquid, press the appropriate settings, and let the rice cooker do the rest. Always follow manufacturer’s instructions.

COOKING RATIOS/TIME:

All white rice: 1 cup white rice to 1 cup liquid.

All brown rice and converted rice: 1 cup rice to 1.25 cup liquid.



recipe to try:

[Creamy Coconut Rice with Spiced Salmon Skewers](#)

HOW TO *Store Rice*

✓ *uncooked rice*

Store uncooked rice in a cool, dry place in a tightly sealed container away from dust, moisture, and other contaminants.



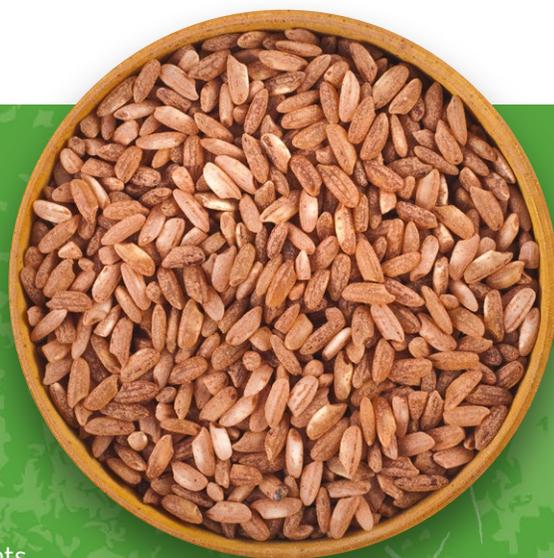
Milled (white) rice will keep almost indefinitely on the pantry shelf, if stored properly.



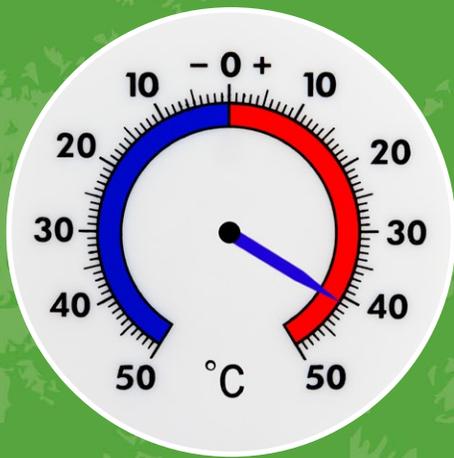
Whole grain (brown) rice has a shelf life of about 6 months, because of the oil in the bran layer. It will stay fresh longer if stored in the refrigerator or freezer.

✓ *cooked rice*

Cooked rice may be held in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days, or frozen for up to 6 months.



RICE AND *Food Safety*



- ✓ The USDA recommends cooling hot rice to 70°F within 2 hours, and then from 70°F to 40°F within an additional 4 hours. Always hold cooked rice at 41°F or below.
- ✓ Cooked rice may be held in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days, or frozen for up to 6 months.

Reheating **RICE**

before you start

Rice loses some of its moisture over time, so it's important to add some liquid during the reheating process. For each cup of cooked rice, add 2 tablespoons of liquid before you reheat.

✓ *microwave*

A perfect technique for small batches as you need them. After hydrating, use 1-minute intervals on HIGH until hot. Plan on approximately 1 minute/cup of cooked rice, and 2 minutes/cup of frozen rice.

✓ *slow cooker*

After hydrating, use the Low setting, but be careful of over-reheating to the point of cooking and ending up with mushy rice.





FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT U.S.-GROWN RICE,
INCLUDING THE FARMS AND FAMILIES WHO GROW IT,
VISIT WWW.THINKRICE.COM.

