

Rice Bowls Your Way Video Transcript (CC)

Hi. I'm Chef Rachel Gooding, and today we're going to talk about rice and flavor.

Experts recommend choosing whole grain versions of your favorites about half the time, and brown rice is a great example of how to make the switch. It's super versatile, affordable, and like all whole grains, it's nutrient rich with lots of fiber, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals.

Not to mention, it's got a nuttiness that comes from the whole grain that is in my opinion, delicious. Plus, it's super easy to make.

Check your packaging for cooking ratios, but for today, we're going to put a cup of rice in our pot, two and a quarter cups of water and a little bit of oil. Cause our brown rice is starting with no sodium, we're adding just a pinch of salt to help round out the flavors. But this step is optional, and if your rice has any sodium, you can skip it.

Now we're going to bring this up to a boil. And once we see the bubbles, we're going to reduce our heat down to low, put the lid on, and walk away. It will take about 45 minutes, so we'll check it then to make sure all the water's been absorbed, and then shut the heat off, and let it sit for a bit.

So, we're playing with rice today, not only because it has nutrient-rich goodness, but it's also a great base for all kinds of flavors.

We're going to mix together a few culturally inspired salt-free seasoning blends based on flavors found in these cuisines that can be added to the rice after it's been cooked. This not only adds flavor but allows you to customize a full meal to your personal tastes. A great way to build any seasoning blend is to start with garlic powder, onion powder and black pepper. This trio is our salt replacer, and everything we add after this is building the flavor profiles you're looking for. For instance, if you want to do a Mediterranean blend, you're going to go heavy on the herbs: things like oregano, basil and mint really bring that cuisine flavors. Something like Asian cuisine, you probably want to add some ginger in there for that hit of spice, and maybe some sesame seeds for a little nuttiness.

Something like Cajun, you want thyme and paprika, oregano in there. You want the heat and the herby-ness that's in that cuisine. And something like your everyday seasoning could be anything you want, things that you like. It's really up to you.

Now that our rice is cooked and we've got our blends, we're simply gonna fold the seasoning into our rice. It's best to do this while it's still hot, as the heat activates the aroma molecules and the spices, and makes things smell incredible. We're gonna add about a tablespoon of seasoning to our now three cups of cooked rice. This is a good basic ratio for seasoning, but you should play around. See how you like it, and the beauty of adding flavor after everything's cooked, is that you and your family can personalize your plates.

If you don't like spicy, but your kids do, they can add more spice. If you're feeling Mediterranean but your mom really wants Creole, you don't have to make two totally different meals. You can just flavor your base differently.

With our rice seasoned, we can make this into so many different things. We've built out a couple bowls as inspiration but use your imagination! MyPlate is a great foundation for helping you create a balanced plate by adding protein and veggies to your whole grains. You can season those with these blends to build layers of flavor that's easy enough to make your own with the spices and herbs you already have in your pantry.

The beauty of blending your own seasonings is that you can put together what you like, and you'll get a ton of meals out of one blend, making them super affordable. And by utilizing a versatile grain like rice, everything is interchangeable.

You can use whatever is speaking to you from your fridge, pantry, or freezer. Visit [MyPlate.gov](https://www.MyPlate.gov) for more ways to Start Simple with MyPlate.