

## Cooking Dry Beans



Row 1: cranberry beans, red lentils, black eyed peas, split green peas, vaquero beans

Row 2: mung beans, Christmas lima beans, beluga lentils, garbanzo beans, flageolet beans

Row 3: yellow eye woman, red beans, split yellow beans, scarlet runner, green lentils

Cooking beans from dry (versus buying canned beans) can add variety to your meals as there are so many dry bean options that aren't available in cans. But if you are new to cooking beans from dry you might feel a little lost in wonderland.

1. Using a pressure cooker, especially an electric pressure cooker, will make this new task a breeze.
2. Lentils and split peas never require soaking. Red lentils and split peas break apart when cooked.
3. Beans other than lentils and split peas can be soaked if desired. Soaking decreases cooking times and allows for much more evenly cooked beans. Some people claim to have reduced digestive distress when soaking beans.

After you have your cooked beans, you may be looking in your pot and thinking ***now what do I do?*** Here's where it gets exciting. You have many options!

1. Drain the beans from their cooking liquid and use as you normally would canned beans. You can add to a soup, on a salad, for hummus, etc. You can reserve the cooking bean water to use as [aquafaba](#). Aquafaba is most popularly made from chickpeas (also called garbanzo beans).
2. Leave beans as is and enjoy in their cooking liquid, especially if they were cooked in broth and/or herbs and spices.
3. Press sauté and gently simmer to reduce cooking liquid to desired consistency. This is great for enhancing any of the spices and flavors in the cooking liquid. You can use these beans in a burrito, burrito bowl, taco, as a side, or on their own.
4. Fork smash 1/4 to 1/2 of the beans to thicken the liquid. You can do this with or without simmering down the liquid to a thicker consistency.
5. Take 1/4 to 1/2 of the beans and some of their liquid. Add to a blender or food processor. Blend or process to desired texture then add back to whole beans. This will give the beans a thicker base.
6. Blend or food process the entire batch of beans. This would make more of a dip or "refried beans" type of a dish.
7. Cook with extra water or stock and blend entire batch into a smooth bean soup.