Bean Basics

Cooking beans is as easy as 1-2-3! Dried beans are cheap, nutritious and delicious! Follow these simple steps to learn how to prepare and cook with dried beans.

Cooking Dried Beans

1. **Sort:** Before preparing dried beans, sort through for tiny pebbles or shriveled beans.
2. **Soak:** Dried beans need to be soaked before they are cooked.
   There are two ways to soak dried beans:

   Quick soak: For each pound (2 cups) of dried beans, add 10 cups of hot water; heat to boiling and let boil for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and set aside for 1-2 hours.

   Overnight soak: For each pound (2 cups) of dried beans, add 10 cups of cold water and let soak overnight, or at least 8 hours.
3. **Cook:** After the beans have soaked, drain soaking water and rinse with fresh water. Cover the beans with fresh water and simmer for 1-2 hours until tender. Beans should always be covered with water.

   Note: Only add salt and acidic foods (like tomatoes, lemon juice, wine or vinegar) at the end of cooking beans. Salt will toughen bean skins and acids can keep beans from ever getting tender.

Storing Dried Beans

- Place in a cool dry place. Beans may spoil if they get wet.
- Dried beans can be kept in an air tight container for a year.

Storing Cooked Beans

- Cooked beans may be stored in the refrigerator for 4-5 days.
- Cooked beans can be stored in the freezer for up to 6 months.
- Before freezing, cover the cooked beans with water to prevent freezer burn.

Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables

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