


# The best bowl of oatmeal



Who doesn't love oatmeal? This fantastic whole grain is packed with fiber, protein, and other nutrients, and it makes a truly phenomenal breakfast. Choosing oatmeal instead of a fast food breakfast sandwich or a breakfast pastry will cut about 20 grams of fat and over 5 teaspoons of sugar per day. Plus, it has about 300 fewer calories than either of those less healthful options. Not totally sure how to prepare this delicious treat? Check out our tips for crafting the best bowl of oatmeal.

## Easy as 1-2-3!

1. **Measure** your ingredients.
2. **Cook** the oatmeal.
3. **Add** your toppings and enjoy!

## Step One: Measure

A plain bowl of oatmeal is made up of oats and water. That's it! However, there are a few different oat options in the market today.

- Rolled oats -- These are what most people consider regular oatmeal. Rolled oats are exactly that: oats that have been rolled flat.
- Steel cut oats -- These oats take much longer to cook but have a nutty, robust flavor. Instead of being flattened like rolled oats, these oats are sliced into small pieces.
- Instant oatmeal -- Instant oatmeal is often chock full of sodium and odd chemicals or additives. For now, steer clear of it.
- **To make rolled oats**, combine one part oats and two parts water.
- **To make steel cut oats**, combine one part oats and four parts water.



Some additions to a bowl of oatmeal are best when cooked right in there with the oats. Consider adding...

- A handful of raisins, dried cranberries, cherries, blueberries, or any other dried berries.
- Chopped dried fruit like apricots or dates.

## Step Two: Cook

There are two ways to prepare oatmeal -- on the stove or in the microwave. Here are instructions for either method.

- To make rolled oats on the stove, heat the water until boiling, add the oats, reduce to a simmer and cook until oatmeal is thick, about 15 minutes.
- To make rolled oats in the microwave, combine your oats and water and then microwave on high for 3-5 minutes, until oatmeal is thick. Let stand for a minute or two, then stir and serve.
- To make steel cut oats on the stove, follow the stovetop instructions for rolled oats (above), but cook for 25-35 minutes.
- To make steel cut oats in the microwave, combine oats and water in a large microwave-safe container and cook for 10 minutes, stirring halfway through. Let rest and then serve!

## Step Three: Top!

There are tons of tasty ways to top your oatmeal without adding a lot of sugar or salt. Try some of these suggestions, or create your own healthful options!

- Top cooked oatmeal and dried fruit with a bit of lemon juice and zest.
- Unsweetened frozen fruit is a perfect topping, especially since it creates its own "sauce" as it defrosts. Try heating up blueberries with a pinch of cinnamon!
- For a dish that tastes like fresh banana bread, stir in sliced bananas and a dash of maple extract.
- Chop a handful of unsalted nuts or seeds and scatter them over your bowl.
- Feeling festive? Add a half cup of pumpkin puree and a pinch of nutmeg.