

Plain White Rice

تمس الأبيض

(*Timman Abyadh*)

(Makes 4 servings)

The amount of water used in cooking the rice is crucial, and eye measurement works better with experienced cooks. According to those eye measurements, there should be enough liquid to cover rice in the pot by $\frac{1}{8}$ inch/8 mm. If you prefer to measure by cups then always remember that *every cup of uncooked rice needs $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups (430 ml) liquid, and just follow the instructions below:*

2 cups (16 oz/ 450 g) rice
 $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (860 ml) cold water
1 tablespoon oil
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

1. In a fine-meshed sieve, big enough to hold rice comfortably, wash rice under running cold water. Let it drain then transfer it to a medium bowl. (If the package directions say there is no need to wash it, then skip this stage, and just put the measured rice in the bowl). Add cold water to rice, and let soak for 30 minutes.
2. In a medium heavy non-stick pot, put rice *with the water in which it was soaking*. Add oil and salt, stir lightly with a wooden spoon. Bring to quick boil, covered, on high heat, for 5 minutes or until most of the moisture has evaporated and small holes start appearing.
3. Turn heat to low and gently and lightly fold rice with a fork or a wooden spoon to allow rice grains to expand while cooking. Cover pot tightly, and simmer for 20 minutes. While simmering, fold rice lightly twice preferably with a fork to allow it to fluff. (Over stirring or folding the rice might cause the grains to break).

How to make the crispy crust:

Traditionally cooked rice with lots of fat will develop a crust with prolonged simmering. However, if you do not want to use oil more than is needed, then simply cook rice as directed above, and five minutes before cooking time is over, uncover the pot, and give heat a boost to high. However, you need to watch it at this stage. Let your nose be the judge.

This method will result in a thin but deliciously crispy crust. To prevent the crust from getting soft or soggy from the steam in the pot, it is essential to invert the rice immediately by putting a plate or tray on top of the pot, and holding both the pot and the plate turn over the pot. The beautiful delicious crust will be on top in one piece.