

Cracked Wheat Pilaf

Learn to make authentic Middle Eastern cracked wheat pilaf with bulgur, vegetables, and aromatic spices.

Healthy, nutritious side dish ready in 40 minutes.

15 min

PREP

25 min

COOK

40 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 2 cup cracked wheat
- 2 green pepper
- 2 tomato
- 1 onion
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 4 cup chicken broth

Instructions

1 Prepare the bulgur wheat

Place 2 cups bulgur wheat in a fine-mesh strainer and rinse under cold running water until the water runs clear, about 1-2 minutes. Drain thoroughly and set aside.

2 Sauté the aromatics

Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan over medium heat (180°C/350°F). Add the diced onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and translucent, about 4-5 minutes.

3 Add the minced garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

4 Toast the bulgur

Add the drained bulgur wheat to the pan and stir to coat with the oil and aromatics. Toast, stirring frequently, until the bulgur is lightly golden and nutty-smelling, about 3-4 minutes.

- 5 Add 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon black pepper, stirring to distribute evenly throughout the bulgur.
- 6 **Cook the pilaf**

Pour in 4 cups hot broth or water and stir once to combine. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat, then immediately reduce heat to low and cover tightly with a lid.
- 7 Simmer covered for 15-18 minutes until all liquid is absorbed and the bulgur is tender when tested with a fork. Do not lift the lid during cooking.
- 8 **Rest and fluff**

Remove from heat and let stand covered for 10 minutes to allow the bulgur to fully absorb any remaining moisture and steam.
- 9 Remove the lid and fluff the pilaf gently with a fork, breaking up any clumps. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed before serving.

Tips

Choose the right bulgur size for your desired texture - fine bulgur (#1) creates a smoother pilaf, while coarse bulgur (#3 or #4) provides more substantial texture and requires longer cooking time.

Always rinse bulgur in cold water before cooking to remove dust and excess starch, which can make the pilaf gummy. Drain thoroughly in a fine-mesh strainer.

Toast the bulgur in a dry pan for 2-3 minutes before adding liquid to enhance its nutty flavor and improve texture. This step prevents the grains from becoming mushy.

Use warm or hot broth instead of cold liquid to ensure even cooking and better flavor absorption. The temperature difference helps the grains cook more uniformly.

Maintain the proper liquid-to-bulgur ratio of 2:1, but adjust based on bulgur size and desired consistency. Fine bulgur may need slightly less liquid.

Avoid lifting the lid frequently during cooking, as this releases steam needed for proper texture. Let the pilaf cook undisturbed until liquid is absorbed.

Allow the finished pilaf to rest off heat for 10-15 minutes with a clean kitchen towel under the lid. This prevents condensation from making the pilaf soggy.

Fluff the rested pilaf gently with a fork rather than stirring with a spoon, which can break the grains and create a mushy texture.