Legumes

Legumes are a great food for almost everyone! They’re cheap, easy to prepare, and nutritious.

Baked beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils and split peas are all types of legumes. Legumes are high in fibre, protein and vitamins, so they can help you feel fuller for longer. They’re also good for your heart!

**How to cook legumes:**

* Tinned legumes are already cooked and are ready to use. Drain off the liquid and rinse the legumes in cold water before use.
* Soak dried beans and chickpeas overnight. Drain and then bring to the boil in fresh unsalted water. Simmer for 30 minutes to 2 hours (check the label).
* Split peas and lentils do not need to be soaked before cooking.

**How to eat legumes:**

* Legumes are high in fibre, so it’s best to introduce them into your diet gradually. This lets your stomach get used to them.
* Add legumes to soups – try red kidney beans or red lentils in vegetable soup or split peas in ham soup.
* Add a cup of red kidney beans, borlotti beans or cannellini beans to a casserole or minced meat dish (like bolognaise or shepherd’s pie).
* Add tinned three bean mix or chickpeas to salads.
* Mash legumes with grated vegetables to make patties. Serve with a salad and bread rolls as a main meal.
* Have baked beans on toast for an easy and quick meal.
* Try making your own falafels out of chick peas. Serve with pita bread and a salad.

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