

African Fufu

Learn to make authentic African fufu with this traditional recipe. Smooth, stretchy starchy side dish perfect with soups and stews.

15 min

PREP

25 min

COOK

40 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

African Fufu

Ingredients

- 2 lb yam
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the yams**

Fill a large pot with cold water. Peel 2 pounds of yams and cut them into evenly-sized 2-inch chunks.
- 2** Place the yam chunks immediately into the cold water to prevent browning.
- 3 Cook the yams**

Add 1 teaspoon salt to the water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Cook the yams for 20-25 minutes until they are completely fork-tender and break apart easily when pierced.
- 4** Reserve 1 cup of the hot cooking water in a measuring cup. Drain the yams in a colander and let them cool for 2-3 minutes until safe to handle.
- 5 Mash the yams**

Transfer the hot yams to a large mixing bowl. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 teaspoon salt.
- 6** Mash the yams with a potato masher or large fork until completely smooth with no lumps remaining, about 3-4 minutes of vigorous mashing.
- 7 Achieve proper consistency**

Add 2-3 tablespoons of the reserved cooking water and continue mashing vigorously until the mixture becomes smooth, sticky, and pulls away from the sides of the bowl when stirred.
- 8** Continue working the mixture with the masher or a wooden spoon for 2-3 more minutes until it becomes elastic and stretchy when lifted.
- 9 Shape and serve**

Wet your hands with warm water to prevent sticking. Shape the fufu into 4 equal portions using your hands, rolling each into a smooth ball.
- 10** Serve immediately while warm alongside soup or stew for dipping.

Tips

Use a food processor or potato masher if you don't have access to a traditional wooden mortar and pestle - both will create the smooth, elastic texture you're looking for.

Add 2-3 drops of lime juice while blending to enhance the flavor and add a subtle acidic note that complements the starchy base.

Gradually add the reserved cooking water to achieve the perfect consistency - too much water will make your fufu too soft and difficult to shape.

Work with wet hands or use plastic wrap when shaping fufu balls, as the mixture can be quite sticky and difficult to handle.

Keep the cooked yams warm while mashing for the best texture - cold yams are harder to achieve the proper smoothness.

If the mixture becomes too thick during preparation, gradually add warm cooking water rather than cold water to maintain the temperature and texture.

Practice the swallowing technique with small pieces first if you're new to eating fufu - it takes time to master this traditional method.

Store any unused cooking water in the refrigerator - it makes an excellent base for soups and contains valuable nutrients from the yams.