# Mushroom and Pearl Barley Broth

2 generous broth bowls, each with half the cooked barley and vegetables | Active 18 min | Cook 57 min | Total 75 min

## Ingredients

- 60 g dry pearl barley (2 oz; about 1/3 cup), sorted and rinsed; use ordinary pearl barley with a 30-40-minute simmering range, not hulled or quick barley
- 200 g (7 oz) fresh cultivated white button mushrooms (Agaricus bisporus), wiped clean and sliced 5 mm/3⁄16 in thick
- 80 g (2 3/4 oz) prepared carrot, cut into 5 mm/3⁄16 in dice
- 50 g (1 3/4 oz) peeled onion, finely chopped
- 10 ml (2 tsp) olive oil
- 650 ml (about 2 3/4 US cups) ready-to-use lower-sodium vegetable stock
- Up to 150 ml water (1/2 cup plus 2 tbsp), only if needed to keep barley submerged or loosen the finished broth
- 5 ml soy sauce (1 tsp)
- 0.5 g dried thyme leaves (about 1/2 tsp)
- 0.3 g ground black pepper (about 1/8 tsp)

## Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Knife and board, Spoon, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls, Microwave-safe bowl, at least 3 L/about 3 1/4 US qt measured capacity, about 22 cm/8 3/4 in inside diameter and 11 cm/4 1/4 in deep, Microwave-safe vented cover, Fine sieve, Fork, Food thermometer for leftover reheating checks

## Allergens

Barley, Soy, Wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

## Make it

**1.** Put the mushrooms, carrot, onion, oil and 30 ml/2 tbsp of the measured stock in the 3 L bowl. Cover with a vent. Microwave at 1000 W full power for 5 minutes, stirring after 2 1/2 minutes. Keep all the released mushroom liquid.

**2.** Add the rinsed barley, remaining 620 ml stock, soy sauce, thyme and pepper. Stir and cover with the vent open. Heat at full power for 5-7 minutes, stirring after 4 minutes, until the broth is bubbling.

**3.** Reduce to 50% power. Cook for 35-45 minutes, stopping every 5 minutes to stir the bottom and turn the grains through the liquid. The broth should keep a gentle bubbling simmer; if it stops bubbling completely between cycles, use 60% power for the next cycle and watch for overflow. If barley is no longer covered by liquid, stir in reserve water in 30 ml/2 tbsp additions. Do not let the bottom dry out.

**4.** Check that barley grains are tender all the way through when pressed and cut, with no hard center, and that the carrot yields readily. If necessary, continue in 2-minute reduced-power bursts with enough liquid. Stand covered for 5 minutes. Stir, divide all the broth, grain and vegetables equally between two bowls and serve.

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## Keep checking the liquid

The optional 150 ml water is a capped reserve, not an instruction to use it all. Add only enough to prevent a dry or overly thick grain bed.

## Allow the full interval

A few hot minutes and a long unheated soak are not the written barley cook. Keep the gentle simmer and the stated checks.

## Ingredient labels

Barley contains gluten. Standard soy sauce commonly contains wheat and soy; tamari does not make the barley dish gluten-free. Stock may contain celery or other allergens. Use only the specified cultivated white button mushrooms; wild or specialty mushroom substitutions are outside this method.

## A useful detail

The 75-minute plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, up to 57 minutes of sequential heating, a 5-minute stand and 3 minutes to check and portion. Frequent stirring is included in the active work. A 1000 W oven is the baseline; a slower barley product, extra water or a less efficient oven can extend the cook. This recipe does not promise a quick lunch from uncooked barley.

## Another way

Replace 80 g/2 3/4 oz carrot with the same weight of peeled parsnip in 5 mm/3⁄16 in dice. Check root tenderness together with the barley.

Replace 5 ml/1 tsp soy sauce with 5 ml/1 tsp label-compatible tamari if desired. This does not remove the gluten in barley; the grain itself remains unchanged.

## Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below. Use within 3 days or an earlier stock deadline. Barley absorbs more broth in storage; add 30 ml/2 tbsp water per portion if needed. Reheat under a vented cover with frequent stirring, stand 2 minutes and check for 165°F/74°C throughout before serving.