

# Food skills

## Lentils

There are many different types of lentils. They are usually identified by their colour, which may be green, red, brown, yellow or black. They are flattish and round like a small pea and, they can be whole or split in half. The green and red lentils cook to a soft purée while the brown, yellow and black keep their shape. Lentils don't need to be pre-soaked and they cook quickly. Lentils are a good source of protein and therefore are a good substitute for meat.

### Did you know

Lentils are a staple food throughout the regions of South Asia (India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal). Most of the world's production of lentils comes from Canada, India and Australia.

## How to cook



1 Wash 1 cup whole dried lentils thoroughly in cold water to remove any dust and debris.



2 Place washed lentils in a large pot with 3 cups of water or stock.



3 Bring to the boil, cover, then reduce heat and simmer until tender.



4 Cook for 15-20 minutes. For split red lentils cook for 5-7 minutes.



5 Drain cooked lentils using a colander / sieve.



6 The lentils should be whole and not mushy.



7 To save time use canned lentils. Drain and rinse them under cold running water.



# Dhal curry with cauliflower and spinach

(serves 4)

## Ingredients

2 tablespoons oil  
1 onion, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tablespoon ginger, grated  
2 tablespoons curry powder  
1 cup dried red lentils, washed  
6 cups water  
2 tomatoes, diced  
½ cauliflower, cut into florets  
½ bag spinach, washed and roughly chopped  
Pinch pepper

## Method



Heat oil in a pot. Cook the onion over low heat until soft. Add garlic, ginger and curry powder. Cook for 1 minute.



Add the red lentils, water and tomatoes. Cook for about 30 minutes or until the lentils are soft.



Add the cauliflower and cook for 5 minutes.



Mix the spinach through and cook for 1 minute. Season with pepper. Serve.

For more recipe ideas and cooking tips visit [heartfoundation.org.nz/recipes](http://heartfoundation.org.nz/recipes) and [vegetables.co.nz](http://vegetables.co.nz)

  
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