

# THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

## CHEESY GRITS, GREENS AND BLACK EYED PEAS



If you're new to cooking it can be daunting to see where to start. The urge to start with some of your restaurant favorite dishes can be strong but they might put you off if it doesn't turn out the way you expect or takes longer than you want. A good rule of thumb is to start off easy and get comfortable with different cooking methods and how long they take.

Easy sheet pan meals are a great start to a fantastic healthy meal. Line a baking sheet with chopped vegetables, potatoes, and chicken. Then sprinkle a mix of spices over them and bake. Find your favorite mix of seasoning spices while easily structuring your plate with half vegetables and a quarter with lean meats.

Other easy meals can be made by taking something easy like pasta and adding a combination of vegetables or other ingredients until you find something you like. Meet your nutrition needs with a combination of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables. Just be sure when choosing frozen and canned goods to select items with no added sugars or fats, and those that are low in sodium. Use whatever combination works for you to meet the recommendations.

Breakfast foods can be quick and often require constant attention will cooking over the stove so they're good cooking basics learning meals. Eggs, oatmeal, potatoes, and grits are easy things to learn to make and modify. They are great starters that can be taken in different directions and made into distinct dishes like a breakfast hash, egg and spinach omelet, or this cheesy grits, greens and blacked eyed peas dish. By adding in a few new ingredients, you take a basic grit dish into a savory restaurant-worthy meal that can be made for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

### CALORIES/SERVING:

Calories: 480

### NUTRIENT CALORIE %:

Protein: 17%  
Fat: 36%  
Carb: 47%

### NUTRIENT / SERVING SIZE:

Protein:	21.2 g	Fiber:	8.2 g
Fat:	19.5 g	Sodium:	774 mg
Carb:	57.5 g	Sat Fat:	9.9 g



### INGREDIENTS (Serves 12)

- 1 cup of Quick Grits
- 4 cups of water
- 1 15 oz. can of Black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
- 4 oz. low-sodium turkey bacon
- ½ cup low- sodium canned stewed tomatoes
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 12 oz. frozen greens (collard or turnip)
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 2 dashes of salt
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- Hot sauce (optional)
- 2-3 dashes red pepper flakes (optional)

### DIRECTIONS:

1. In a medium sized skillet over medium heat melt the butter, add the diced onions salt and cooking, stirring often until translucent.
2. On a microwave safe plate, place 4 slices of the bacon on a single layer and cover with a paper towel. Microwave for 3 minutes until crispy. May need to microwave in additional 30 second increments, until desired layer of crispy. Set aside, and repeat with an additional 4 slices. (Be careful, the plate will be hot, so handle with care. Set cooked bacon aside.
3. Once onions are tender, add the frozen greens and diced tomatoes and 1-2 tbsp of additional water. Cover and cook for 4-6 minutes until the greens start becoming tender. Add the drained black-eyed peas, onion powder and other optional spices. Cover and continue cooking over medium heat. Stir occasionally until the greens are the desired level of tender. Add additional water 1-2 tbsps. at time throughout cooking to prevent burning or sticking.
4. Meanwhile, in a sauce pan, begin cooking the grits according to package directions. Once cooked, remove from heat and add the garlic powder, cheese and hot sauce (if using), stir and cover to melt the cheese.
5. Serve by placing 1/4th of the grits on a plate, topped with one 1/4th of the greens and beans and slice of the bacon crumbled over the top.

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