

Lentil & Vegetable Soup with Barley

Version 1



- 100 g dried lentils (rinse, soak if needed)
- 50 g pearl barley
- 1 medium carrot (about 100 g), diced
- 1 medium celery stalk **or** daikon (about 60 g), diced
- 1/2 medium onion (about 75 g), diced
- 5 ml olive oil (1 tsp)
- Herbs: 1/4 tsp dried thyme, 1 small bay leaf, freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 800 ml water or low-sodium vegetable broth

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1. Heat olive oil in a pot. Sauté onion until translucent.
 2. Add carrot, celery or daikon; stir for a minute or two.
 3. Add lentils, barley, herbs, and water or broth.
 4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 35–40 minutes, or until soft.
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Estimated Nutrition (Per Serving, assuming 2 servings)

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	~260 kcal
Protein	~13 g
Carbohydrates	~45 g
• Fiber	~12 g
• Sugars	~5 g
Fat	~3 g
• Saturated Fat	~0.4 g
	Depends on broth
Sodium	— with low-sodium broth: ~300 mg or less

Lentil & Vegetable Soup with Barley & Tofu

Version 2

Yield: 4 servings



- Olive oil – **15 g (1 T)**
- Onion – **150 g**, diced
- Carrot – **150 g**, diced
- Celery – **100 g**, diced (or *daikon* 120 g)
- Garlic – **2 cloves (10 g)**, minced
- Pearl barley – **80 g**
- Dried lentils (brown or green) – **200 g**, rinsed
- Diced tomatoes – **400 g can**
- Water or homemade low-sodium broth – **1.2 L** (5 cups)
- Firm tofu – **200 g**, cut into 1.5 cm cubes
- Dried thyme – **½ tsp**
- Dried oregano – **½ tsp**
- Bay leaf – **1**
- Cumin – **½ tsp**
- Black pepper – **¼ tsp**
- Salt – **½ tsp** (adjust to taste at end)
- Spinach – **150 g** (or *kale/shungiku*)

1. Heat **olive oil** in a pot.
2. Sauté **onion, carrot, celery** **5 min**.
3. Add **garlic + cumin**, cook **1 min**.
4. Stir in **lentils, barley, tomatoes, water/broth, thyme, oregano, bay leaf, pepper, salt**.
5. Bring to boil, then **simmer** on **medium-low**, partially covered, **30 min** until lentils/barley tender.
6. Gently stir in **tofu** and **cook another 10 min**.
7. Add **spinach** in **last 3 min**.
8. Adjust seasoning, finish with **lemon juice** or splash of **vinegar**.

Nutrition (per serving, ~450 g soup)

- Calories: ~250 kcal
- Protein: ~17 g
- Fat: ~8 g
- Carbs: ~35 g
 - Fiber: ~10 g
- Sodium: ~280 mg

Japanese Variation Ideas for Lentil & Vegetable Soup

- **Seasoning base:**
 - Replace thyme/oregano with **2 tsp grated ginger + 1 Tbsp white miso** (stir miso in at the end so it doesn't lose aroma).
 - Add **a dash of soy sauce or coconut aminos** instead of salt for umami.
- **Vegetables:**
 - Swap spinach for **komatsuna, shungiku, or mizuna** (autumn greens).

- Use **daikon** instead of celery for a Japanese-style root sweetness.
 - Add a few slices of **shiitake or shimeji mushrooms** for depth.
- **Protein options:**
 - **Chicken version:** add **200 g skinless chicken thigh** cut small, simmer in broth.
 - **Tofu version:** use **200 g firm momen-dōfu**, cubed, added last 10 minutes.
- **Finish:**
 - Garnish with **chopped negi** (green onion) or **yuzu zest** for a fragrant lift.