

Easy 20-Minute Tempura Shrimp Recipe - The Only Batter You'll Ever Need

Crispy Fried Tempura Shrimp: The Secret to the Perfect Golden Crunch



OVEN
350°F

TIME
2 to 3 min

METHOD
Air fryer

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

1 lb Fresh Shrimp: Large or jumbo work best. Ensure they are peeled and deveined, but keep the tails on for easy dipping.

1/3 Cup Cornstarch: This is the secret to a dry, crisp exterior before the batter even hits.

1/2 Teaspoon Salt: To enhance the natural sweetness of the shrimp.

1 Large Egg: Acts as the binder for your batter.

1 Cup Cold Water: Crucial Step! The water must be ice-cold to prevent the flour from developing too much gluten.

1 Cup All-Purpose Flour: The base of your batter.

Neutral Oil for Frying: Vegetable, canola, or peanut oil are ideal due to their high smoke points.

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prep the : Shrimp:** Start by deveining the shrimp and removing the shells. Make sure to leave the tail intact-it acts as a natural handle. Pat the shrimp completely dry with paper towels. Moisture is the enemy of crispiness!
- 2. The : Dry Coat:** In a shallow bowl, toss the shrimp with cornstarch and salt until evenly coated. Shake off any excess.
- 3. Heat the : Oil:** Fill a heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven with about 2-3 inches of oil. Heat it to 350°F (175°C). If you don't have a thermometer, dip the end of a wooden spoon in; if it bubbles steadily, it's ready.
- 4. Mix the : Batter:** In a separate bowl, whisk the egg and the ice-cold water together.
- 5. Incorporate : Flour:** Add the flour to the egg mixture. Here is the golden rule: Do not overmix. Use a fork or chopsticks to stir until just combined. Lumps are perfectly fine-even encouraged! Overmixing creates gluten, which makes the batter bread-like instead of crispy.
- 6. The : Dip and Fry:** Once the oil is hot, hold a shrimp by the tail, dip it into the batter to coat thoroughly, and gently lay it into the oil.
- 7. Fry in : Batches:** Fry 4 to 5 shrimp at a time to avoid crowding the pot. If the oil temperature drops too much, the shrimp will absorb oil and become greasy.
- 8. Golden : Perfection:** Fry each shrimp for 2 to 3 minutes per side until they are a very light golden brown.
- 9. Drain:** Remove the shrimp with a slotted spoon or tongs

and place them on a plate lined with paper towels to soak up any surface oil.

10. Repeat: Continue with the remaining shrimp and serve immediately.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Water: If you want an even lighter, bubblier crust, swap the cold water for cold seltzer water or club soda.

The carbonation adds extra air pockets.

Gluten-Free Option: You can substitute the all-purpose flour with a high-quality gluten-free 1-to-1 baking flour or extra rice flour for an even crispier result.

Shrimp Prep: If you want your shrimp to stay perfectly straight (like in restaurants), make 2-3 small shallow incisions along the "belly" of the shrimp and press it flat on the cutting board until you feel a tiny pop.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Keep it Cold: I recommend keeping your batter bowl inside a larger bowl filled with ice.

A cold batter hitting hot oil creates an immediate steam reaction that results in that signature lacy tempura texture.

Don't Overcrowd: It's tempting to dump them all in, but work in small batches.

This keeps the oil temperature consistent.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/easy-20-minute-tempura-shrimp-recipe-the-only-batter-youll-ever-need/>