



BEEF
IT'S WHAT'S FOR DINNER.®

Reducing Fat in **Ground Beef**

The versatility of ground beef has made it one of America's all-time favorite go-to cuts. From hamburgers to lasagna, tacos to meatloaf, pasta sauce to wraps, it offers a quick, easy and delicious meal option for any occasion.

Reducing Fat in Cooked Ground Beef Crumbles by Rinsing

When preparing a dish that calls for cooked ground beef crumbles, the fat content can be reduced by rinsing after cooking. This is an excellent way to take advantage of lower-priced 70% lean (30% fat) ground beef and still reap the benefits of a leaner product.

Step 1

Heat a large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add ground beef and cook 8-10 minutes, breaking into small crumbles and stirring occasionally.

Cook's Tip: Cooking times are for fresh or thoroughly thawed ground beef. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F as measured by a meat thermometer.

Step 2

Meanwhile, place 4 cups of water in a microwaveable bowl and microwave on HIGH for 5-6 minutes or until very hot, but not boiling.

Step 3

Using a slotted spoon, remove beef crumbles to a large plate lined with paper towels and let sit for 30 seconds to 1 minute, blotting the top of the beef with an additional paper towel.

Step 4

Transfer beef to a fine mesh strainer or colander. Pour hot water over beef to rinse fat. Drain for 5 minutes.

Step 5

Proceed as your recipe of choice directs.

Note: If the recipe calls for browning ground beef with onion or garlic, it can be done at the same time and then rinsed without significant loss of flavor.

Additional seasonings such as salt, pepper, and herbs should be added after rinsing beef crumbles to minimize any loss of flavor.

Changes in Fat Content of 100 grams* of Ground Beef Due to Pan-Frying and Blotting, and Warm-Water Rinsing

Raw Product	Grams of Fat		
	90% Lean	80% Lean	70% Lean
Raw Ground Beef	10g	20g	30g
Pan-Fried Patties	8g	11g	11g
Pan-Fried Crumbles	7g	9g	9g
Pan-Fried Crumbles (Rinsed)	3g	4g	4g

*100 grams = 3.5 ounces

Note: While warm water rinsing greatly reduced fat in crumbled beef, it did not substantially reduce the amounts of protein, iron, zinc, or vitamin B₁₂.



Other Fat-Reducing Tips when Cooking with Ground Beef

- For recipes where rinsing and blotting is not feasible, it is best to use 90% lean or extra-lean (97% lean) ground beef product.
- If time does not allow for the blotting and/or rinsing of ground beef, remove any excess fat from the skillet during cooking. Using a crumpled white paper towel, carefully soak up fat as it accumulates during browning and before additional ingredients are added.
- Substitute low-fat, low-calorie versions of ingredients, such as low-fat or non-fat sour cream for regular sour cream.
- Cook with fresh ingredients that do not contribute extra fat and contain few calories such as hot and sweet peppers, onion, garlic, and tomatoes.

From fried rice to tacos, here are some of our favorite ground beef recipes!



Buege, D. 1993. Reducing fat in ground beef. Wisconsin Meat Facts and Analysis. ME 93-1.
 Love, J.A. and K.J. Prusa. 1992. Nutrient composition and sensory attributes of cooked ground beef: Effect of fat content, cooking method, and water rinsing. J Am Diet Assoc 92:1367:1371.
 USDA National Nutrient Database <https://www.nal.usda.gov/human-nutrition-and-food-safety/food-composition>



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