**Step 1. Soak the Beans**

**Overnight Soak:**
Put the dry beans in a bowl and cover with a couple inches of water. Cover the bowl with a lid or plastic wrap and leave overnight to soak.

**Quick Soak:**
Add about 6 cups of water for every 2 cups of beans to a pot. Heat to boiling and cook for 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat, then cover and let the beans soak for another hour.

**Step 2. Drain and Rinse**
Drain the water that the beans have been soaking in and rinse them in water.

**Step 3. Cook**
Transfer the beans to a pot and cover in a couple inches of water. Bring the water to a boil, reduce the heat to medium, then simmer until the beans are tender but firm. *Most beans take about 45 minutes-2 hours to cook. You can check the beans periodically to see if they're done. Add a pinch of salt when the beans are just about done cooking.*

**Step 4. Season (Optional)**
Toss the beans in seasonings of your choice. Aromatics like chopped onion, shallot, garlic, and chiles or herbs such as rosemary, sage, bay leaves, and thyme pair well with most beans.

**Step 5. Enjoy!**

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**Easy Picnic Food Ideas:**

**Sandwiches, Wraps, and Rolls**
Pack a variety of toppings to pair with bread and tortillas. Pre-cut your veggies and toppings before you pack them to make it easier to stuff in your sandwich! Pair any kind of toppings in your sandwiches and don’t be scared to get creative! Leftovers can go great in sandwiches and potato chips add the best crunch to any sandwich or wrap!

**Beans, Pasta Salads, and Green Salads**
Throw a variety of toppings together in your next salad. Try to pair a protein option with chopped veggies and cheese. Toss together in your favorite dressing or make your own quick dressing with some oil, salt and pepper, vinegar, and lemon juice. Eat it straight out of the container, or pack individual servings in mason jars for a quick on the go meal!

**Appetizers and Dips**
Build a fun appetizer spread with your favorite snacks and a variety of ingredients such as cheeses, crackers, and chopped veggies. Pre-cut everything before you go and bring a large tray to spread everything on as you picnic. Throw together a quick salsa to dip your snacks in with tomatoes, onions, and a splash of vinegar. If you like ranch, try adding a ranch seasoning packet to some plain Greek yogurt for an extra-nutritious dip!

**Desserts**
Throw together a variety of chopped fruits for an easy fruit salad! Try melting some chocolate in the microwave with a splash of milk or oil for a delicious chocolate fruit dip!

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**Featured Recipe of the Week: Picnic Foods**

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**Mindful Campus Practices**

Mindful Campus Practices are brought to you by Hokie Wellness. These 5 minute guided meditation practices engage us in each of our physical senses to feel more grounded in the campus environment and to focus our awareness on the present moment. You can engage in these meditation practices by using the audio portion if you are physically near these campus locations, or you can complete these practices from anywhere by utilizing the videos depicting the real sights and sounds of Hahn Garden, the Drillfield, and The Duck Pond.

Grab your friends and some good food and check out these mindful practices while enjoying a nice picnic on campus!

For more information, check out the videos here:

[www.tinyurl.com/vtmindfulcampus](http://www.tinyurl.com/vtmindfulcampus)