

Falafel are surprisingly easy to make. The hardest part is remembering to leave your chickpeas soaking before you leave for work so they are ready to go when you get home. The spices and amounts aren't set in concrete. In fact, most families will have their own secret recipe—why not develop your own?

*1 cup of dried chick peas—don't even think about using canned chickpeas!*

*1 large onion chopped into chunks*

*2 garlic cloves*

*a good handful of chopped parsley*

*1 tsp baking soda*

*1 tsp ground cinnamon*

*½ tsp of ground nutmeg*

*1 tsp of ground cumin*

*2 tsp ground coriander*

*some cayenne pepper or other chilli powder (to taste)*

*1 tsp salt and pepper as you like*

OR

*One pack of frozen/dried falafel mix*

*Pita bread*

*Yoghurt*

*Mint*

1. If you are using falafel mix then skip to step 4.
2. Soak the dried chickpeas in a lot of water for at least 8 hours. They aren't going to be cooked at this stage but the soaking makes them nice and soft so they can be processed into a rough mixture.
3. Drain the chickpeas and throw them with the rest of the ingredients into a food processor and process in small bursts. Go carefully here—you don't want a fine, mushy paste. It needs some texture (think breadcrumbs or dukka) or it will be horrible to eat. This is why canned chickpeas won't work. They are pre-cooked, and within seconds will have become a gluey mess that is far from what a good falafel should be. The mixture needs to hold together though, so keep blitzing until it does and add a little water if necessary.
4. Shape into balls with the idea of someone having 3-4 each. Flatten slightly.
5. Heat some oil in a pot or heavy based pan until it reaches 190°C or so when you drop a small bit of bread in, it goes golden brown in 30 seconds. Turn the heat down and try to maintain it at that temperature as too hot they will cook too quickly and not be cooked in the middle and too cold, they won't cook quick enough and soak up too much oil. (alternatively use a deep fryer).
6. Fry in batches until golden brown (erring on more brown than gold)—you want to make sure the inside is completely cooked.
7. Drain them as you take them out and place on a paper towel.
8. Eat with warm pita bread, tahini, salad & yoghurt with chopped mint stirred through it.

