

tofu

<https://www.agoramores.com/food/ingredients/tofu>

Tags: food · ingredients

Related

ingredients

- [pickled red onion](#)
- [smoked salmon](#)
- [sashimi grade fish](#)
- [sauces](#)
- [red wine vinegar](#)
- [mayonnaise](#)

food

- [recipes](#)
- [eating](#)
- [bread recipes](#)
- [cooking oils](#)
- [cuisines](#)
- [cucumber tea sandwiches](#)

Tofu

Soy milk curdled with a coagulant and pressed into blocks — cheese-making applied to soybeans, and about two thousand years old. In cold food it is the most reliable vegetarian protein because, unlike beans, it takes on whatever it is marinated in.

Firmness, and why it decides everything

Type	Coagulant	Use
Silken	usually GDL, set in the pack	Blended dressings, chilled <i>hiyayakko</i> , desserts. Falls apart if handled
Soft / medium	nigari or gypsum	Soups
Firm	pressed	Cubes for bowls, marinating
Extra-firm / super-firm	heavily pressed	Frying, poke bowl substitute, anything that must hold its shape

For a cold bowl, buy **extra-firm** unless the recipe says otherwise.

Pressing

Water in the block is water the marinade cannot get into. Drain, wrap in a towel, and put a weight on it for 20–30 minutes; a heavy pan works. You will pour off a surprising amount.

The freezer trick: freeze a block of firm tofu, thaw it, and press. The ice crystals leave a spongy, chewy structure that absorbs marinade dramatically better and eats far more like a meat substitute. It is the single best thing you can do to cheap tofu.

Marinating for cold food

Tofu needs **an hour**, not the fifteen minutes raw fish takes. Soy sauce, rice vinegar, sesame oil, ginger, garlic. Salt and acid penetrate; fat and aromatics mostly sit on the surface, which is why frying or roasting afterwards helps.

Keeping

Unopened, to the date on the pack. Opened, 4 days refrigerated **submerged in fresh water, changed daily**. Marinated and cooked, 4 days.

Elsewhere on the site

Used in: [poke bowl](#) · [cold soba bowl](#) · [rice noodle bowl](#) · [banh mi](#) · [mezze plate](#)

Related: [soy sauce](#) · [edamame](#) · [toasted sesame oil](#) · [Glycine Max](#) (growing)