

How-To Make Basic Onigiri

by Christina Wainwright

INGREDIENTS

Sushi rice

Fillings: Use whatever you think tastes good with rice. For this H2F video I used:

Umeboshi (sour pickled plums)

Cooked salmon, separated into flakes

Canned tuna, drained

Mayonnaise (standard or Japanese-style "Kewpie" mayo)

Furikake or Gomashio

Nori (roasted seaweed sheets), cut into smaller sections

INSTRUCTIONS

Onigiri are Japanese rice balls. You can just mix flavorings directly into your rice, or use rice (flavored or plain) to surround your favorite fillings. You can also add seasonings or part of your filling to the outside, to indicate what is inside and to help with the taste. Get creative and have fun! Here are some basic guidelines to keep in mind while making your onigiri.

- How much rice you'll use depends on what size onigiri you want to make. I roughly estimate $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cooked rice per onigiri.
- Wet your hands between forming each rice ball. This will prevent the rice from sticking to your hands.
- The easiest onigiri are just formed into balls without a center filling, so I recommend starting with these. I like to mix furikake and/or flaked salmon into this style of rice ball. To form a triangle instead of a ball, bend both hands to create your angles then rotate the onigiri between squeezes.
- When adding a filling to the center, you should start by flattening out small portions of rice in your hand. Use one as a base then top it with your filling. Then use more of these rice "sheets" to wrap the rest of your filling. Squeeze the onigiri into your desired shape, adding more rice if needed.
- If you opt to wrap your onigiri in nori, you can choose whether you'd rather wrap the entire thing or just cover a portion of your onigiri with seaweed.

