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How To Quickly Cook Shrimp on the Stovetop

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Serves 4 to 6

What You Need

Ingredients
1/2 to 1 pound medium-sized (17-21 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails on
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil or butter, or a mix
Coarse kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Equipment
Colander
Sauté pan
Spatula

Instructions

1. **If frozen, thaw the shrimp:** Place the shrimp you want to cook in a colander in the sink and run cold water over them for about 5 minutes. Toss the shrimp occasionally to make sure they are all exposed to the cold water.

2. **The shrimp will bend easily when thawed:** You will know that the shrimp is thawed and ready when they are no longer frozen solid but soft, easily bendable, and slightly translucent. This will only take a few minutes. Pat the shrimp dry with a paper towel.

3. **Warm the oil or butter over medium-high heat:** Tilt the pan as the oil warms, or butter melts, to coat the bottom of the pan.

4. **Add the shrimp to the hot pan:** When the oil is hot and flows easily, add the shrimp to the pan. The shrimp should sizzle on contact (if not, warm your pan a little longer next time).

5. **Season the shrimp with salt and pepper:** Sprinkle salt and pepper over the shrimp. Be generous! You can also add any other seasonings at this point — chili spice, curry spice, a bit of harissa, or any other seasonings in your cupboard.

6. **Sauté the shrimp until pink and opaque:** The shrimp will start off looking grey and translucent, but will gradually become pink and opaque as they cook through. The tails will also turn bright red. Cook the shrimp, stirring frequently, until the flesh is totally pink and opaque, and you see no more grey bits. Depending on the size of your shrimp and how many you have in the pan, this will usually take 4 to 5 minutes.

7. **Transfer to a serving dish:** Serve sautéed shrimp immediately with pasta or over grains. Leftover shrimp is also fantastic in salads or cold preparations.