

Quick Pickled Cucumbers (Oi Muchim)

A refreshing Korean cucumber side dish that perfectly balances crisp texture with spicy, garlicky, and sesame flavors. This quick pickle provides the perfect counterpoint to rich Korean dishes.

Ingredients

English cucumber	1 large	Toasted sesame oil	2 tsp.
or Regular cucumbers	2 medium	Sugar	½ tsp.
Kosher salt	1½ tsp.	Toasted sesame seeds	1 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	4	Black pepper	¼ tsp.
Green onions	2		
Gochugaru	1½ tsp.		
Rice vinegar	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

If using regular cucumbers, peel and halve lengthwise — Mince **garlic** — Slice **green onions** thinly — Prepare ice water bath

1. For regular cucumbers: Remove seeds with a spoon, then slice into 1/8-inch half-moons. For English cucumber: Slice into 1/8-inch rounds.
2. Place cucumber slices in a colander, sprinkle with **kosher salt**, and toss gently. Let drain for *30 minutes* (regular) or *20 minutes* (English).
3. Rinse cucumbers briefly under cold water. Plunge into ice water bath for *1 minute*. Drain well and pat thoroughly dry with paper towels.
4. In a large bowl, combine minced **garlic**, **gochugaru**, **rice vinegar**, **toasted sesame oil**, **sugar**, and **black pepper**.
5. Add dried cucumber slices and sliced **green onions** to the bowl. Toss gently but thoroughly to coat.
6. Sprinkle with **toasted sesame seeds**, toss once more, and let rest for *10 minutes* before serving.

Equipment Required

- Large colander
- Large mixing bowl
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Paper towels
- Measuring spoons
- Large bowl for ice bath
- Vegetable peeler (if using regular cucumbers)

Mise en Place

- Prepare ice water bath before starting
- Measure all seasonings before beginning
- Have paper towels ready for drying cucumbers
- Toast **sesame seeds** if needed

Ingredient Tips

- English cucumbers are ideal, but regular cucumbers work well when properly prepared
- Fresh **garlic** is essential - do not substitute pre-minced
- **Gochugaru** can be found at Asian markets - no good substitute exists
- Use unseasoned **rice vinegar** for better control of flavors
- Regular table salt can be used, but reduce quantity by half

Preparation Tips

- Slice cucumbers as uniformly as possible for even texture
- Don't skip the ice bath - it ensures maximum crispness
- Pat cucumbers very dry before adding seasonings
- Adjust **gochugaru** amount based on desired heat level
- Test seasoning before final rest period

Make Ahead & Storage

- Best served fresh, within *2 hours* of preparation
- Can be made up to *4 hours* ahead, but texture will soften
- Store leftovers in airtight container for up to *24 hours*
- Do not freeze
- Drain any accumulated liquid before serving leftover portions

Serving Suggestions

- Perfect accompaniment to Korean BBQ or grilled meats
- Serve cold or at room temperature
- Excellent as part of a banchan (Korean side dish) spread
- Can be used as a sandwich or burger topping
- Pairs well with rice dishes and noodles