



You will need: a strainer, a medium pot or saucepan, a large bowl, a knife, a spoon, one (12-ounce) box of quinoa, salt and pepper, three tomatoes, a couple of handfuls of your favorite olives, half a lemon, olive oil, crumbly cheese such as feta, blue, or ricotta salata (optional)

Step
1



Rinse the quinoa in the strainer under cold water until the water runs clear.

Step
2



Put the quinoa **in the pot** and cover it with about three inches of cold water. **Salt the water** and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. **Boil** the quinoa uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes, or until cooked. You'll know it's ready when the white outer casings have popped, revealing translucent little beads.

Step
3



Strain the quinoa and transfer it to the bowl. Allow it to come to **room temperature** (about 45 minutes). Steps 1 through 3 can also be done the night before you make the salad.

Step
4



Chop the tomatoes and olives. If the olives have pits, smash them under the palm of your hand and remove the pits before chopping.

Step
5



Add the tomatoes and olives to the quinoa. Hold your hand over the bowl and squeeze the juice of the **lemon** half into your palm to catch the seeds, letting the juice fall into the quinoa.

*From the store to the kitchen to the table: We outline the steps that get you from something raw to something cooked using simple ingredients, free of measurements and complicated techniques. A method that you can have in your back pocket and whip out whenever you like. We call it recipe-free cooking.



Step
6



Drizzle with a generous amount of **olive oil**, season with **salt and pepper**, and stir.

Step
7



Crumble the cheese (if using) over top of the quinoa and fold in. Taste, and add more salt and pepper as desired.