

Crispy Buttermilk Chicken, Your Way

Ingredients

For Chicken Tenders:

1½ pounds chicken tenders
Neutral oil, for shallow frying

Buttermilk Marinade:

2 cups buttermilk
1½ tsp salt
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp paprika
½ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp cayenne pepper

For Fried Chicken:

2½–3 lbs bone-in, skin-on chicken pieces
Neutral oil, for deep frying

Seasoned Flour Coating:

1¾ cups all-purpose flour (2½ cups for bone-in)
1 tsp salt (1½ tsp for bone-in)
1 tsp paprika (1½ tsp for bone-in)
½ tsp garlic powder (¾ tsp for bone-in)
½ tsp onion powder (¾ tsp for bone-in)
½ tsp black pepper (¾ tsp for bone-in)
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
½ tsp baking powder
2–3 tbsp buttermilk (3–4 tbsp for bone-in)

No buttermilk?

Mix 1 tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar into 1 cup of whole milk. Let it sit for 10 minutes until slightly thickened — this makes 1 cup of buttermilk substitute.

Instructions

1. Marinate the chicken in buttermilk, salt, and spices for 2+ hours or overnight.
2. Mix flour, spices, baking powder, and buttermilk until clumpy.
3. For Chicken Tenders: Dredge tenders and press the coating firmly. Let rest 10–15 minutes.
4. Shallow fry in ½ inch oil, 3–4 minutes per side until golden.
5. For Fried Chicken: Dredge bone-in chicken and press the coating firmly. Let rest 15–20 minutes.
6. Deep fry in 325–350°F oil. Dark meat: 13–15 min. White meat: 10–12 min.
7. Let rest 5–10 minutes on a rack before serving.

Note & Storage

- Store leftovers in the fridge up to 3 days.
- Reheat in oven or air fryer at 375°F (190°C) for 10–15 minutes.
- Leftover tenders are great in wraps, sandwiches, or salads.
- Marinade time boosts flavor — overnight is best.
- Keep oil temp steady for even crispiness.
- Resting after coating improves texture.
- Skip buttermilk in flour for a lighter crust (less crispy).
- Adjust cayenne for more or less heat.
- To serve fresh, pre-fry then re-fry briefly before eating.