

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 15-18 minutes
- Total Time: 33 minutes
- Yield: 4 servings (approx. 1.5 cups crisp onions)
- Difficulty Level: Easy
- Cooking Intensity: Moderate (Requires frequent tossing for even browning)

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Equipment Needed

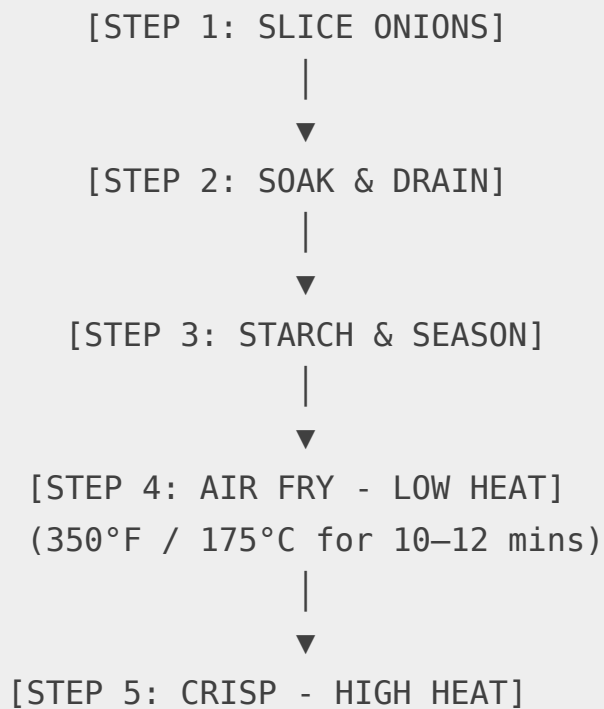
- Air Fryer (basket-style or oven-style)
- Mandoline slicer or sharp chef's knife
- Large mixing bowl
- Fine-mesh strainer or colander
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Tongs

Ingredients

- Onions: 2 medium yellow or sweet onions (peeled, sliced thin into 1/8-inch half-moons)
- Buttermilk or Milk: 1/2 cup (helps the dry coating adhere; dairy-free milk with 1/2 tsp vinegar works as a substitute)
- All-Purpose Flour: 1/3 cup
- Cornstarch: 2 tablespoons (the secret to maximum crunch)

- Garlic Powder: 1/2 teaspoon
- Paprika: 1/4 teaspoon (smoked or sweet)
- Fine Sea Salt: 3/4 teaspoon (divided)
- Black Pepper: 1/4 teaspoon (freshly cracked)
- Cooking Oil Spray: Avocado oil or canola oil spray (high smoke point)

Step-by-Step Instructions



(380°F / 190°C for 3–5 mins)



[STEP 6: COOL & SETT]

Step 1: Slice the Onions Uniformly

Using a sharp chef's knife or a mandoline slicer, slice the onions into thin rings or half-moons approximately 1/8-inch thick. Keeping the thickness uniform is critical; slices that are too thick will stay soft inside, while slices that are too thin will scorch before crisped. Separate the individual layers into separate strands.

Step 2: Soak and Drain

Place the sliced onions into a bowl and pour the buttermilk over them. Toss gently so every strand is coated, then let them sit for 5 minutes. Soaking tempers the raw bite of the onion and gives the starch mixture a tacky surface to stick to. Transfer the onions to a colander and let the excess liquid drain off completely for 1–2 minutes.

Step 3: Coat with Seasoned Starch

In a large, clean bowl, whisk together the all-purpose flour, cornstarch, garlic powder, paprika, 1/4 teaspoon of the salt, and the black pepper. Add the drained onions to the bowl. Toss thoroughly using your fingers or tongs, separating the strands so each piece gets a light, dusty coating. Transfer the onions to a fine-mesh strainer and shake off all excess flour. A heavy coat of dry flour will create a gummy layer rather than a crisp bite.

Step 4: Preheating and First Stage Air Frying (Low Heat)

Preheat your air fryer to 350°F (175°C) for 3 minutes. Spray the bottom of the air fryer basket with non-stick cooking oil. Transfer the coated onions into the basket, spreading them out as

evenly as possible. It is acceptable if they overlap slightly, but do not pack the basket more than half full (cook in two batches if using a small basket).

Liberally spray the top of the coated onions with cooking oil. Ensure no visible dry patches of white flour remain, as un-oiled flour will taste chalky and will not brown.

Air fry at 350°F (175°C) for 10 to 12 minutes, pulling the basket out every 3 minutes to shake and toss the onions vigorously with tongs. Redistribution ensures the outer edges don't burn while the inner strands steam.

Step 5: Final Stage Crisp (High Heat)

Once the onions have shrunk and turned a pale golden tone, increase the temperature to 380°F (190°C). Spray one more light layer of oil if they look dry.

Air fry for an additional 3 to 5 minutes, monitoring continuously through the basket or pulling it out every minute. Watch closely during this stage, as the step from golden-crisp to burnt happens rapidly. Remove them as soon as they reach a deep golden brown and feel firm to the touch.

Step 6: Cool and Season

Transfer the crispy onions immediately onto a paper towel-lined plate or cooling rack. Sprinkle evenly with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon of sea salt while they are still hot. Allow them to cool completely for 5 to 10 minutes. As they cool, the remaining steam evaporates, locking in their signature crunch.

Pro Tips for Air Fryer Success

- **Don't Skip the Cornstarch:** Cornstarch lowers the gluten structure of the coating, preventing the batter from turning chewy or leathery under air-circulation heat.

- **Oil Coverage is Key:** Because air fryers use circulating dry air rather than deep oil immersion, any un-oiled flour spot will stay powdery. A generous misting of high-heat cooking spray is required for realistic “fried” texture.
- **Batch Size Matters:** Crowding the basket leads to steamed, soggy onions. If doubling the recipe, cook in distinct batches and combine them for a 1-minute flash warm-up right before serving.

Storage and Reheating

- **Room Temperature Storage:** Store completely cooled onions in an airtight glass container lined with a dry paper towel at room temperature for up to 5 days. Do not refrigerate, as moisture in the fridge will soften the crunch.
- **How to Re-Crisp:** If the onions absorb ambient humidity and lose their crispness, scatter them back into a preheated air fryer at 350°F (175°C) for 1 to 2 minutes.

Estimated Nutritional Information

Serving size: 1/4 of total recipe (approx. 1/3 cup cooked)

Nutrient	Amount per Serving
Calories	110 kcal
Total Fat	3.5 g
<i>Saturated Fat</i>	0.5 g
<i>Trans Fat</i>	0 g
Cholesterol	1 mg
Sodium	440 mg

Nutrient	Amount per Serving
Total Carbohydrates	17 g
<i>Dietary Fiber</i>	1.5 g
<i>Sugars</i>	3.5 g
Protein	2.5 g
Calcium	25 mg
Iron	0.6 mg
Potassium	120 mg