

To reduce any bacterial risk while using a slow cook crock pot, follow these simple rules:

1. Keep raw ingredients refrigerated until they are to be put in the cooker.
2. Thaw frozen meat or poultry before cooking.
3. Cut vegetables in small pieces to ensure rapid heat transfer.
4. When cooking meat, the water or stock level should almost cover the meat to ensure effective heat transfer.
5. Do not overload the crock pot. Half full to three-fourths full is recommended for most crock pots.
6. Do not leave cooked food to cool down in the crock pot. Either consume it immediately or cool the food rapidly and refrigerate.
7. **Never reheat leftovers in the crock pot.** Reheat leftovers on the stove, in the oven or microwave.
8. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

For Cooking Without Looking



Use a Crock Pot



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Nutrition Education Program

Extension Dunn County
3001 US Hwy 12 E, Suite 216
Menomonie WI 54751
(715) 232-1636

FoodWise education is funded by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program – EFNEP.

An EEO/AA employer, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.

These recipes and more are available at:
<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplatekitchen/recipes>
& <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipes/>

Benefits of Crock Pot Cooking

- 1) The crock pot offers "all-day cooking without looking." Most meat and vegetable combinations can cook for 8 to 10 hours unattended.
- 2) Food doesn't overcook or burn if left longer than required. Food cooked slowly will be tenderer after prolonged cooking. Liquids do not boil away as in conventional methods of cooking.
- 3) One-step preparation is convenient. Simply put all ingredients in the crock and cook. Exception would be adding milk, cream or sour cream during the last hour.
- 4) Simmered foods taste better than boiled foods because more natural juices and flavors of food are retained. Keep the cover on.



Every time the lid is lifted, add 15-20 minutes to the overall cooking time.

- 5) The crock pot is economical to operate. Low wattage over an extended period costs less than high wattage for a short time.
- 6) A wide variety of foods can be prepared. Less tender cuts of meat cook with less shrinkage and therefore, are moist and tender.
- 7) Food is heated, but not the kitchen. Clean up is simple if the crock pot is stoneware and is removable.

Slow Cooker Tips

Ideally, the initial temperature of the crock pot should be as high as possible. In the case of meat, this can be done by browning the meat before cooking. Vegetables can be placed in a pot of boiling water for a few minutes before putting them in the crock pot.

You may pre-warm the crock pot by filling it with boiling water for a few minutes.

Recipes suggest putting vegetables in the pot first and the meat on top.

- Don't set a hot crock on a cold surface. Always place a hot pad or towel under it.
- To speed up the cooking time of most recipes, including soups and stews, follow the rule that 1 hour on High is equal to 2 hours on Low. (This is not recommended for cooking desserts.)
- Fat retains heat more readily than water, so fattier recipes will cook faster than those with less fat. Trim meats and brown them prior to putting them in the crock pot.
- Steam accumulates on the slow cooker's lid and the contents of the crockery tend to get watered down. Use thickeners such as flour, cornstarch and tomato paste to give texture to the dish.

Serving and Clean-up

- Use a slow cooker on a buffet table to keep soup or stew hot.
- Soak, then scrub off all cooked-on stains between uses. Abrasive cleanser is fine for this. Don't be tempted to leave food residue on the crock. It will cook off and become part of your next meal!

Menu Idea
Slow Cooker Pork Stew
over Brown Rice
Low fat Milk

Slow Cooker Pork Stew over
Brown Rice

(8 servings) *Per serving:*
 360 calories, 5 grams of fat

2 pound lean pork stew meat
 3 cup baby carrots
 1 large onion, sliced
 1½ teaspoon dried thyme leaves
 ½ teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1½ cup complete bran and wheat flakes ready-to-eat cereal (crushed to ¾)
 1 cup dried tart cherries
 ¾ cup 100% apple juice or apple cider
 4 cup hot cooked brown rice

1. Trim fat from pork.
2. Spray large pan with non-stick cooking spray. Cook half of the pork at a time until browned.
3. In a 4-6 quart crockery cooker layer carrots, onion, thyme, pepper, salt, and garlic. Sprinkle with cereal and cherries.
4. Top with pork and pour apple juice or cider over contents in the cooker.
5. Cover and cook on low setting for 7-8 hours or on high setting for 3½ to 4 hours.
6. Prepare the brown rice according to package directions toward the end of the stew cooking time. (Brown rice typically takes 40-45 minutes to cook).
7. Stir pork mixture and serve over ½ cup brown rice.

Menu Idea
Lentil Tacos
Corn
Grapes
Low fat Milk

Lentil Tacos

(6 servings)

Per serving: 350 calories,
11 grams of fat

1 onion, diced
 2 cloves garlic, diced (or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder)
 1 cup dried lentils
 ½ package (1.25 ounces) of 40% less sodium taco seasoning
 3 cups water
 12 corn tortillas
 1 cup salsa
 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
 2 cups lettuce, shredded

1. Spray slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Stir all ingredients together in a slow cooker.
2. Cook on high for 4 hours.
3. Heat corn tortillas according to package directions.
4. Spread ¼ cup lentil mixture onto each tortilla.
5. Serve with salsa, cheese, and lettuce.

Menu Idea
Slow Cooker Roast
Canned Peaches
Low fat Milk

Slow Cooker Roast

(8 servings)

Per serving: 350 calories,
11 grams of fat

2 large carrots
 2 large potatoes, quartered
 1 large onion, quartered
 3 pounds beef roast
 1 package (1.25 ounces) store-bought onion soup mix
 4 cups water

1. Spray slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Place all ingredients in slow cooker, vegetables first.
2. Cook on low for at least 8 hours.
3. Use two forks to shred beef right before serving.
4. Use cooking liquid as a dripping sauce for the meat.

Tips:

- Put meat on buns and use cooking liquid as a dipping sauce to make French dip sandwiches.
- Substitute pork roast for beef roast
- Leftover cooking liquid can be used as a broth for soup.
- Wash and cut vegetables the night before. Store them separately from the raw meat.

Menu Idea
Mexican Chicken Soup
Crackers
Apple Slices
Low fat Milk

Mexican Chicken Soup

(8 servings)

Per serving: 210 calories,
3 grams of fat

2 cans (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes
 ¾ cup dried black beans, rinsed
 1 bag (16 ounces) frozen corn, thawed
 3 cups water
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 ¼ teaspoon pepper
 1 pound skinless and boneless chicken breast, thawed
 Optional ingredients:
 Baked tortilla chips, chili flakes, chopped cilantro, jalapenos, lime, sliced or chopped avocado, salsa, light sour cream, or shredded cheese

1. Add all ingredients to the slow cooker. Cook for 4 to 6 hours on high or cook for 8 to 10 hours on low.
2. Remove chicken right before serving. Shred using two forks. Stir shredded chicken into soup.
3. Serve with choice of optional ingredients.

Menu Idea
Slow Cooker Pork Chili
Cornbread Muffin
Watermelon Slices
Low fat Milk

Slow Cooker Pork Chili
 (6 servings)
*Per serving: 250 calories,
 8 grams of fat*

- 2 pounds boneless pork butt, roast, or shoulder
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced (1 medium pepper)
- 1 cup onion, (1 medium onion)
- 1 ½ cups salsa
- 1 can (15 ounces) low sodium pinto beans
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) low sodium diced tomatoes

1. Trim visible fat from the pork. Cut into 2 inch chunks. Place in slow cooker.
2. Add pepper, onion, and salsa.
3. Cook on low setting for 6 hours or a high setting for 3 hours.
4. Pull the meat apart into shreds with a fork. (You should have about 4 cups.)
5. Put half (2 cups) of the shredded pork in the refrigerator or freezer. Freeze pork if it will not be used within 4 days.
6. Return the rest of the pork to the slow cooker. Add pinto beans and diced tomatoes.
7. Cook another 30 minutes until hot.

Menu Idea
Black Eyed Pea Soup
Whole Wheat Dinner Roll
Clementine
Low fat Milk

Black Eyes Pea Soup
 (5 servings)
*Per serving: 200 calories,
 1 gram of fat*

- ½ pound dried black eyed peas
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup water
- 6 carrots, chopped
- 2 ribs celery, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon seasoning (basil, dried oregano, rosemary, or sage)

1. Rinse and sort black eyed peas to remove any dirt or debris.
2. Place all ingredients in the slow cooker and mix.
3. Cook on low for 8 hours.

Tips:

- This recipe can be prepared on the stovetop. Use 2 additional cups of water and cook for 2 hours on medium. Stir occasionally. For safety, cook on a back burner.
- All fresh vegetables need to be washed under running water before using. Always use a clean knife and cutting board.

Slow Cooker Stuffing
 (16 servings)
*Per serving: 151 calories,
 2 grams of fat*

- ½ cup light butter
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2½ tsp dried parsley
- 2 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 12½ cups 100% whole wheat bread, cubed
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup chopped apple
- 1 tsp poultry seasoning
- 1½ tsp dried sage
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 dash garlic powder
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 egg plus 2 egg whites, beaten

1. Melt butter in a large pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, mushrooms, and parsley to pan. Stir often until veggies are tender.
2. Combine bread cubes, cranberries, and apple in a large bowl. Pour veggies over bread cubes and mix gently.
3. Season with poultry seasoning, sage, thyme, garlic powder, and pepper. Pour in broth (just enough to moisten) and gently mix in eggs.
4. Transfer mixture to slow cooker and cover.
5. Set slow cooker to high for 45 minutes; then reduce heat to low and cook for 4-8 hours.



Menu Idea
Grilled Chicken Breast
Slow Cooker Stuffing
Corn
Low fat Milk