FROM THANKSGIVING TO NEW YEAR'S DAY

HOLIDAY SLOW COOKER SOUPS

10 Cozy Recipes for Winter Evenings



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WELCOME

Winter evenings call for a pot of something warm. This collection gives you ten soups and stews for the holidays, from Thanksgiving week to New Year's Day.

Every recipe follows the same simple method as the *Slow Cooker Soup Cookbook for Busy Home Cooks*: load the pot in the morning, let it cook, and finish in minutes when you are ready to serve.

Each recipe is written for a 6-quart slow cooker and serves 6.

HOW TO READ A RECIPE

The top of each recipe shows **Prep** (your hands-on time), the **Slow cook** times on **LOW** or **HIGH** (use one of them), and how many it **Serves**. The last step, **Finish**, is the short extra step at the end. The badges tell you what to expect: **Dump-and-Go** means no browning or sautéing before the pot. Some recipes use fully cooked ingredients, such as ham, sausage, or meatballs, and a short Finish at the end. **Workday-Proof** means the main cooking is a single stage of about 8 hours on LOW, so it suits a long day away. **Freezer-Friendly** means it freezes and reheats well, following the Storage line.

FOOD SAFETY IN BRIEF

Use a food thermometer. All poultry, including turkey, is done at 165°F. Whole cuts of beef and pork cook well past 145°F in these recipes, until they are tender.

Thaw meat and poultry in the refrigerator before it goes into the slow cooker. Fresh dairy, such as half-and-half and cheese, always goes in with the heat off.

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours of turning off the cooker (within 1 hour if the room is above 90°F), in shallow containers, and eat them within 3 to 4 days. Reheat leftovers on the stove or in the microwave to 165°F, never in the slow cooker.

To blend a soup in the pot, turn the cooker off first and keep the blender head under the surface. With a countertop blender, follow its manual: use only a container approved for hot liquids, stay under the fill line, and vent the lid so steam can escape. Start on the lowest speed and never blend hot soup in a sealed container. If your blender is not approved for hot liquids, let the soup cool first, blend it in small batches, and reheat it on the stove to 165°F.

Cooking times are estimates. They vary with the model, size, and age of your slow cooker and with how full it is. Always follow your appliance manual. Nutrition information is an estimate and is not a substitute for advice from a doctor or registered dietitian. Recipes may contain common allergens, including milk, eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, and sesame.



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THREE HOLIDAY MENUS

Thanksgiving Week

Turkey and Stuffing Soup · Green Bean Casserole Soup · Spiced Pear and Parsnip Soup

Make the Pear and Parsnip Soup through the blending step a day ahead and refrigerate it in shallow containers. Reheat it on the stove to 165°F, turn off the heat, and stir in the half-and-half and lemon juice just before serving.

Christmas Week

Italian Wedding Soup · Scalloped Potato and Ham Soup · Beet Borscht

The Italian Wedding Soup base and the Borscht freeze well, so you can cook them weeks ahead. Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat on the stove.

Dinner with Guests

French Dip Beef Soup · Beef Bourguignon-Style Stew · Bigos-Style Sausage and Sauerkraut Stew

All three cook all day on LOW. The Bourguignon-style stew and the Bigos-style stew freeze well and taste even better the next day.

And for any cozy winter evening: Cranberry-Sage Chicken and Sweet Potato Soup (page 13).



TURKEY AND STUFFING SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 3 medium carrots, sliced (about 180 g)
- [ ] 3 celery ribs, sliced (about 120 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1½ lb (680 g) turkey breast tenderloins
- [ ] 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth (about 1.9 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp dried sage
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 2 bay leaves
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 4 cups herb-seasoned stuffing cubes (about 100 g)

METHOD

1. Add the carrots, celery, onion, and garlic to a 6-quart slow cooker. Set the turkey on top.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the sage, thyme, bay leaves, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the turkey reaches 165°F and shreds easily.
4. Remove the bay leaves. Shred the turkey in the pot with two forks.
5. **Finish.** Turn to HIGH. Stir in the stuffing cubes, cover, and cook 10 minutes, until softened. Serve right away, because the cubes keep soaking up broth.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use boneless, skinless chicken thighs instead of turkey. The times stay the same.

STORAGE Freeze the soup before you add the stuffing cubes.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 240 cal | 32 g protein | 20 g carbs | 3 g fat | 2 g fiber | 670 mg sodium



GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
10 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 12 oz (340 g) sliced cremini mushrooms
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1½ lb (680 g) gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
- [ ] 1 can (10.5 oz / 300 g) condensed cream of mushroom soup
- [ ] 6 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth (about 1.4 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 lb (450 g) frozen cut green beans
- [ ] 1 cup (240 ml) half-and-half
- [ ] 1 cup (about 30 g) crispy fried onions

METHOD

1. Add the mushrooms, onion, garlic, and potatoes to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Whisk the condensed soup with 1 cup of the broth in a bowl until smooth. Pour it into the pot, then add the rest of the broth, the thyme, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the potatoes are tender.
4. **Finish.** Turn to HIGH. Stir in the green beans, cover, and cook 30 to 40 minutes, until tender. Turn off the heat and stir in the half-and-half. Top each bowl with the crispy fried onions.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use whole milk instead of half-and-half for a lighter soup.

STORAGE Refrigerate for 3 to 4 days. This soup does not freeze well. Add fresh crispy onions when you serve it.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 270 cal | 9 g protein | 38 g carbs | 10 g fat | 6 g fiber | 830 mg sodium



SCALLOPED POTATO AND HAM SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 2½ lb (1.1 kg) gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ¾-inch pieces
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 12 oz (340 g) fully cooked ham, diced (about 2 cups)
- [ ] 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth (about 1.4 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- [ ] 1 cup (240 ml) half-and-half
- [ ] 1½ cups (170 g) shredded Gruyère or Swiss cheese
- [ ] 2 Tbsp chopped fresh chives

METHOD

1. Add the potatoes, onion, garlic, and ham to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the thyme, pepper, and nutmeg.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the potatoes are very tender.
4. Mash about a third of the potatoes right in the pot with a potato masher to thicken the soup.
5. **Finish.** Turn off the heat. Stir in the half-and-half. Add the cheese a handful at a time, stirring until melted. Top each bowl with chives.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use sharp white cheddar instead of Gruyère.

STORAGE Refrigerate for 3 to 4 days. This soup does not freeze well.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 410 cal | 25 g protein | 38 g carbs | 17 g fat | 5 g fiber | 900 mg sodium



FRENCH DIP BEEF SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO · WORKDAY-PROOF · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 8–9 hr · HIGH 4–5 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 2 large yellow onions, sliced (about 400 g)
- [ ] 4 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 2 lb (910 g) beef chuck roast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- [ ] 7 cups low-sodium beef broth (about 1.7 L)
- [ ] 2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- [ ] 1 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 2 bay leaves
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 6 slices baguette, ½ inch thick (about 120 g)
- [ ] 6 slices provolone cheese (about 6 oz / 170 g)

METHOD

1. Add the onions and garlic to a 6-quart slow cooker. Set the beef on top.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, thyme, bay leaves, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 8 to 9 hours or HIGH for 4 to 5 hours, until the beef is fork-tender.
4. Remove the bay leaves. Break up the beef with two forks.
5. **Finish.** Set the oven to broil. Lay the baguette slices on a baking sheet and top each with a slice of provolone. Broil 2 to 3 minutes, until the cheese is melted and golden. Float one cheesy toast on each bowl.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use Swiss cheese instead of provolone, or add 8 oz (230 g) sliced mushrooms at the start.

STORAGE Freeze the soup without the toasts.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 490 cal | 41 g protein | 21 g carbs | 27 g fat | 2 g fiber | 980 mg sodium



ITALIAN WEDDING SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 4 medium carrots, finely diced (about 240 g)
- [ ] 4 celery ribs, diced (about 160 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 10 cups low-sodium chicken broth (about 2.4 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- [ ] ½ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 1 package (12 oz / 340 g) fully cooked Italian-style meatballs, thawed in the refrigerator (about 24 small)
- [ ] ¾ cup (130 g) acini di pepe or other tiny pasta
- [ ] 5 oz (140 g) baby spinach
- [ ] ½ cup (40 g) grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD

1. Add the carrots, celery, onion, and garlic to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the vegetables are tender.
4. **Finish.** Turn to HIGH. Stir in the thawed meatballs and the pasta, cover, and cook 25 to 30 minutes, until the pasta is tender and the meatballs reach 165°F. Turn off the heat and stir in the spinach until wilted, 3 to 5 minutes. Top each bowl with Parmesan.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use chicken or turkey meatballs.

STORAGE Freeze the soup before you add the meatballs, pasta, and spinach.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 300 cal | 17 g protein | 31 g carbs | 11 g fat | 3 g fiber | 930 mg sodium



BEET BORSCHT

DUMP-AND-GO · WORKDAY-PROOF · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
20 min	LOW 7–8 hr · HIGH 4–5 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 1½ lb (680 g) beets, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- [ ] 2 medium carrots, diced (about 120 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 2 medium gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ¾-inch pieces (about 300 g)
- [ ] 3 cups shredded green cabbage (about 270 g)
- [ ] 1 can (14.5 oz / 410 g) diced tomatoes, undrained
- [ ] 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- [ ] 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth (about 1.4 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp dried dill
- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 3 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- [ ] 2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill or parsley
- [ ] ½ cup (120 g) sour cream, for serving (optional)

METHOD

1. Add the beets, carrots, onion, garlic, potatoes, and cabbage to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, broth, dried dill, salt, and pepper. Stir to dissolve the tomato paste.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 7 to 8 hours or HIGH for 4 to 5 hours, until the beets are tender.
4. **Finish.** Stir in the vinegar and the fresh dill. Taste and add a pinch of salt if needed. Top each bowl with a spoonful of sour cream.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Add 12 oz (340 g) sliced, fully cooked smoked sausage at the start for a heartier soup.

STORAGE Freeze the soup without the sour cream. Beets can stain plastic containers, so store the soup in glass.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 190 cal | 6 g protein | 34 g carbs | 4 g fat | 7 g fiber | 670 mg sodium



SPICED PEAR AND PARSNIP SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 2 lb (910 g) parsnips, peeled and sliced ½ inch thick (about 8 medium)
- [ ] 3 ripe pears, peeled, cored, and chopped (about 540 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- [ ] 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth (about 1.4 L)
- [ ] ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- [ ] ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] ¼ tsp black pepper
- [ ] ½ cup (120 ml) half-and-half
- [ ] 2 tsp lemon juice

METHOD

1. Add the parsnips, pears, onion, garlic, and ginger to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the parsnips are very soft.
4. Turn off the cooker. Blend the soup in the pot with an immersion blender until smooth.
5. **Finish.** Stir in the half-and-half and the lemon juice. Taste and adjust the salt.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use full-fat coconut milk instead of half-and-half for a soup without dairy.

STORAGE Freeze the soup before you add the half-and-half.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 210 cal | 3 g protein | 47 g carbs | 3 g fat | 11 g fiber | 460 mg sodium



BEEF BOURGUIGNON-STYLE STEW

DUMP-AND-GO · WORKDAY-PROOF · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 8–9 hr · HIGH 4–5 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 3 lb (1.36 kg) beef stew meat or chuck roast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- [ ] 12 oz (340 g) cremini mushrooms, halved
- [ ] 4 medium carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces (about 240 g)
- [ ] 1½ cups (225 g) frozen pearl onions
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- [ ] 1 cup (240 ml) dry red wine (optional, see below)
- [ ] 2 cups (480 ml) low-sodium beef broth
- [ ] 1 tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 2 bay leaves
- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 2 Tbsp cornstarch mixed with 2 Tbsp cold water
- [ ] 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

METHOD

1. Add the beef, mushrooms, carrots, pearl onions, and garlic to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Whisk the tomato paste into the wine and broth in a bowl. Pour it into the pot. Add the thyme, bay leaves, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 8 to 9 hours or HIGH for 4 to 5 hours, until the beef is fork-tender.
4. **Finish.** Remove the bay leaves. Turn to HIGH. Stir in the cornstarch mixture, cover, and cook 15 minutes, until thickened. Stir in the parsley. Serve over mashed potatoes or egg noodles.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Skip the wine. Use 1 cup more beef broth and add 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar at the Finish.

STORAGE Freeze the stew before you add the parsley.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 530 cal | 47 g protein | 14 g carbs | 28 g fat | 3 g fiber | 540 mg sodium



BIGOS-STYLE SAUSAGE AND SAUERKRAUT STEW

DUMP-AND-GO · WORKDAY-PROOF · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
20 min	LOW 8–9 hr · HIGH 4–5 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 1 lb (450 g) pork shoulder, cut into 1-inch cubes
- [ ] 12 oz (340 g) fully cooked smoked kielbasa, sliced ½ inch thick
- [ ] 1 bag or jar (32 oz / 900 g) sauerkraut, drained and rinsed
- [ ] 3 cups shredded green cabbage (about 270 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 8 oz (230 g) sliced mushrooms
- [ ] 1 large apple, peeled and chopped (about 200 g)
- [ ] 1 can (14.5 oz / 410 g) diced tomatoes, undrained
- [ ] 2 cups (480 ml) low-sodium chicken broth
- [ ] 1 tsp caraway seeds
- [ ] 1 tsp smoked paprika
- [ ] 2 bay leaves
- [ ] 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper

METHOD

1. Add the onion, mushrooms, cabbage, and sauerkraut to a 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Add the pork, kielbasa, and apple. Pour in the tomatoes and broth. Sprinkle with the caraway, paprika, brown sugar, and pepper, then add the bay leaves.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 8 to 9 hours or HIGH for 4 to 5 hours, until the pork is fork-tender. The pot will look full, and the cabbage cooks down. Keep it within your manual's maximum fill line.
4. Remove the bay leaves. Stir well before serving.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY For more tang, skip the rinse and use the sauerkraut straight from the bag. The sodium will be higher. Serve with rye bread.

STORAGE This stew tastes even better the next day. It freezes well.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 430 cal | 25 g protein | 24 g carbs | 27 g fat | 8 g fiber | 1330 mg sodium



CRANBERRY-SAGE CHICKEN AND SWEET POTATO SOUP

DUMP-AND-GO · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

PREP	SLOW COOK	SERVES
15 min	LOW 6–7 hr · HIGH 3–4 hr	6 · 6 qt

INGREDIENTS

- [ ] 1½ lb (680 g) boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- [ ] 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ¾-inch pieces (about 500 g)
- [ ] 3 celery ribs, sliced (about 120 g)
- [ ] 1 medium yellow onion, chopped (about 150 g)
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 medium apple, peeled and chopped (about 180 g)
- [ ] ½ cup (50 g) fresh or frozen cranberries
- [ ] 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth (about 1.4 L)
- [ ] 1 tsp rubbed sage
- [ ] ½ tsp dried thyme
- [ ] 1 Tbsp maple syrup
- [ ] ¾ tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 3 oz (85 g) baby kale (about 3 cups)

METHOD

1. Add the sweet potatoes, celery, onion, garlic, apple, and cranberries to a 6-quart slow cooker. Set the chicken on top.
2. Pour in the broth. Add the sage, thyme, maple syrup, salt, and pepper.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 7 hours or HIGH for 3 to 4 hours, until the chicken reaches 165°F and shreds easily.
4. Shred the chicken in the pot with two forks.
5. **Finish.** Stir in the baby kale. Cover and cook 10 minutes, until wilted.

MAKE IT YOUR WAY Use turkey breast tenderloins instead of chicken thighs. The times stay the same.

STORAGE Freeze the soup before you add the kale.

PER SERVING, ESTIMATE 270 cal | 26 g protein | 29 g carbs | 5 g fat | 5 g fiber | 600 mg sodium



THANK YOU FOR COOKING WITH ME

I hope these soups make your winter evenings warmer and your holiday kitchen a little calmer. Load the pot, set the time, and enjoy the people at your table.

— *Isabella Douglas*

KEEP COOKING

The **Slow Cooker Soup Cookbook for Busy Home Cooks** has 108 soups, chilis, and stews plus 12 Freezer Dump Kits, each with its own photo, clear LOW, HIGH, and Finish times, and four weekly meal plans.

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