

'Tis the season to slow-cook!



14 recipes tried, tested and tasted by



Introduction

As people get older, their relationship with food often changes. Older people living alone may be particularly vulnerable: many report losing interest in food and cooking, resulting in not eating sufficiently, and not eating enough of the right foods to maintain a healthy diet.

For a whole host of reasons, slow cookers are ideal for older people in the kitchen:

- They are safe and cheap to run.
- So long as it has enough liquid in it, food doesn't burn in a slow cooker and it creates delicious smells as it cooks, tempting even frail appetites.
- Using a slow cooking heat creates soft food that's easy to chew, which can be a concern for some older people.
- This also means you can use cheaper cuts of meat that might be tough through normal cooking, but which become more tender once you've cooked them for hours, helping with the weekly food budget.
- Most ingredients for slow cooking recipes can be pre-chopped and stored in freezer bags, so you can prepare the basics in advance and just place the defrosted ingredients in the pot with liquid on the day of cooking.
- Slow cooker recipes also lend themselves to batch cooking, so extra portions can be refrigerated or frozen for eating on another day.
- At the end of the meal, there is (usually) only one pot to wipe clean.

In the following pages, we are delighted to provide a selection of recipes that have been recommended by members of the Seniors Helping Seniors community, and subsequently tried, tested and tasted by us too! Quantities are given in imperial measurements as well as metric and photos give you an idea of what you might produce. You will find:

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 - Minestrone soup
 - Vegetable soup
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- Main meals on pages 7 – 13:
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We hope these recipes tempt your appetite and encourage you to enjoy spending a little more time in the kitchen. Happy slow-cooking!

Leek and potato soup



Serves 6 – 8

Preparation time: 20 mins

Cooking time: 3 – 4 hours

Ready in: 3½– 4½ hours

Ingredients

450g (1 lb) russet potatoes, peeled and diced
3 leeks, cleaned and diced
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 litre (1 ¾ pints) vegetable stock
250ml (½ pint) water
4 sprigs lemon thyme
200g (7oz) plain low-fat Greek yogurt
Salt and pepper, to taste

Method

1. Add all ingredients to the slow cooker, except for the Greek yogurt. Cook on High for 3 – 4 hours (or on low for 7 – 8 hours).
2. Remove the thyme sprigs. Using an immersion blender, blend ingredients together until smooth and creamy. Stir in Greek yogurt. Season with salt and pepper.

Minestrone soup



Serves 4 – 6
Preparation time: 30 mins
Cooking time: 1½ hours
Ready in: 2 hours

Ingredients

1tbsp olive oil or butter
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
100 g pancetta or streaky bacon (3½ oz)
2 carrots, chopped
2 sticks celery, chopped
1 x tin (400g/ 14oz) chopped tomatoes
1 x tin (400g/14oz) cannellini beans, drained
1 litre (1 ¾ pints) vegetable stock
½ Savoy cabbage, shredded
75 g (2½ oz) pasta or pearl barley or macaroni

Method

1. Fry onion, garlic and bacon for 5-10 minutes until golden.
2. Add carrots and celery and fry for a further 5 minutes.
3. Transfer fried ingredients to the slow cooker. Add tomatoes, beans, vegetable stock, cabbage and pasta, and stir together.
4. Cook on Low for 1½ hours.
5. Alternatively add all the ingredients to the slow cooker and cook on Low for 2 hours (note: the frying helps to draw out the taste of the ingredients, but can be skipped if you want a true one-pot dish!).

Vegetable soup



Serves 6 – 8

Preparation time: 30 mins

Cooking time: 4 – 6 hours

Ready in: 4½– 6½ hours

Ingredients

- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 2 small celery ribs, chopped
- 150g (6oz) green beans, trimmed and cut in to 1-inch pieces
- ¼ head of cabbage, chopped
- 2 small russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 x tin (400g/ 14oz) chopped tomatoes
- 1 litre (1¾ pints) chicken or vegetable stock
- ½ teaspoon of dried thyme
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. In a large soup pot, heat the one tablespoon of the olive oil over medium high heat. Add the onion and garlic, and cook until nearly translucent.
2. Add the rest of the chopped veggies, sautéing for just a minute or two; the extra tablespoon of olive oil is if you need it for the rest of the veggies. Add the thyme and salt and pepper while sautéing.
3. Place the veggies in the slow-cooker; add the tomatoes and stock.
4. Cook on high for 4 – 6 hours (or low for 7 – 9 hours).
5. Just before serving, gently mash some of the potato chunks against the side of the crock pot to thicken the soup, give it a stir and serve.

Stuffed mushrooms



Serves 2
Preparation time: 20 mins
Cooking time: 2 hours
Ready in: 2 hours, 20 mins

Ingredients

6 large mushrooms
1 tablespoon of unsalted butter
2 teaspoons of olive oil
½ onion, finely minced
1 garlic clove, minced
50g (2oz) soft bread crumbs
100g (3oz) grated cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon of grated parmesan cheese
Pinch of salt
¼ teaspoon of dried oregano

Method

1. Remove the stems from the mushrooms and set the caps aside. Trim off the ends of the stems and chop them into small pieces.
2. In a small saucepan, heat the butter and olive oil over a medium heat. Add the chopped mushroom stems, onion and garlic, and cook until tender – about 4 to 5 mins. Remove the pan from the heat.
3. In a small bowl, combine the cooked vegetables, bread crumbs, cheeses, salt and oregano. Stuff this mixture into the mushroom caps. Arrange the mushrooms stuffing-side up in the bottom of the slow cooker.
4. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours or until the mushrooms are tender and the cheese has melted. Serve immediately.

Coq au vin (chicken cooked in red wine)



Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 7½ hours

Ready in: 8 hours

Ingredients

- 250ml (½ pint) dry red wine
- 500ml (1 pint) low-sodium chicken stock
- 4 tablespoons tomato purée
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 500g (1lb) boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 12 mushrooms, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon cornflour

Method

1. Combine the wine, ¾ of the stock, tomato purée and oregano in the slow cooker and stir to dissolve the purée.
2. Sprinkle the salt and pepper over the chicken and place it in the slow cooker. Add the onion, carrot, mushrooms and garlic, and stir.
3. Cover and cook on low for 6 – 7 hours.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the cornflour and the remaining ¼ of the broth; add the mixture to the slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 15 – 20 minutes or until the sauce thickens. Serve hot.

Massaman chicken curry



Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 8 hours

Ready in: 8 hours, 15 mins

Ingredients

500g (1lb) boneless, skinless chicken thighs

300g (10oz) russet potatoes, peeled and diced

1 onion, chopped

1 x 210g jar of massaman Thai curry paste

2 tablespoons plain flour

500ml (1 pint) low-sodium chicken stock

1 x 400ml (14oz) tin coconut milk

2 tablespoons fish sauce

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 tablespoon brown sugar

Several handfuls of spinach, chopped and washed

Method

1. Place the onion and potatoes in the slow cooker. Add curry paste and coconut milk, and mix.
2. Add the chicken stock, fish sauce, lemon juice and brown sugar. Mix again.
3. Place the flour in a plastic bag, add the chicken thighs and shake until the meat is coated in flour. Add the chicken to the slow cooker.
4. Cook on Low for 8 hours. About 30 minutes before the end of the cooking time, add the spinach to the pot and mix well. Serve with rice.

Lancashire Hot Pot



Serves 4

Preparation time: 20 mins

Cooking time: 4 hours

Ready in: 4 hours, 20 mins

Ingredients

750g (1½ to 2lbs) boneless leg of lamb, diced

50g (2oz) plain flour

2 onions, sliced

2 sticks celery, sliced

1 carrot, cubed

100g (3oz) swede, cubed

30ml (1½ tablespoons) dry sherry

½ teaspoon prepared English mustard

1 large pinch ground nutmeg

3 bay leaves

1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

400ml (¾ pint) beef stock

3 cloves garlic, minced

Salt and pepper, to taste

450g (1lb) potatoes, peeled and sliced

2 tablespoons butter

Method

1. Coat the lamb with flour then combine all of the ingredients (except the potato slices and butter) in the slow cooker. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Cover with potato slices then dot with butter and season.
3. Cover the slow cooker and cook on High for 3 – 4 hours. The lamb and potatoes should be tender. Serve hot.

Rosemary-crusted lamb



Serves 6
Preparation time: 15 mins
Cooking time: 8 hours
Ready in: 8½ hours
(including time to sit before carving)

Ingredients

- 1.75kg (4lb) bone-in leg of lamb, trimmed
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped rosemary
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 lemons, washed and sliced into rings

Method

1. Rinse the lamb and cut away any netting and excess fat. Place it in the slow-cooker.
2. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the olive oil, chopped rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper. Using a soft rubber spatula or your hands, rub this mixture evenly over the entire piece of meat. Place the lemon slices on top of and around the edges of the lamb.
3. Cover and cook on Low for 8 hours, or until the meat has relaxed and begun to lose shape, and can be easily pulled apart with two large forks. Remove the meat and let it sit for 10 minutes before slicing with a sharp knife.

Beef and vegetable stew



Serves 6 – 8

Preparation time: 10 mins

Cooking time: 6 – 7 hours

Ready in: 6 ½ hours

Ingredients

- 1kg (2lb) beef stew meat (cut into bite-sized pieces)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 small celery ribs, chopped
- 2 – 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 6oz can tomato paste
- 1 litre (1¾ pints) beef stock
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 6 – 8oz baby carrots
- 4 – 5 small red potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 150g (5oz) frozen peas
- 150g (5oz) frozen sweetcorn
- ¼ cup flour
- ¼ cup water

Method

1. Combine beef, celery, carrots, onion, potatoes, salt, pepper, garlic, parsley, oregano, Worcestershire sauce, beef broth, and tomato paste in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on High for 6-7 hours (or on Low for 10 hours).
2. About 30 minutes before serving, mix the flour and the water together in a small dish and pour into the slow cooker. Mix until well combined. This will add a nice thickness to the stew. Add in the frozen peas and corn. Continue cooking covered for 30 minutes.

Shepherd's Pie



Serves 5

Preparation time: 35 mins

Cooking time: 5 ¼ hours

Ready in: 6 hours

Ingredients

900g (2 lb) potatoes, peeled and quartered

2 tablespoons butter

60ml (3 tablespoons) milk

¾ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

500g (1lb) lean minced beef

1 large onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

3 tablespoons tomato puree

10 mushrooms, sliced

2 medium carrots, chopped

250ml (1/2 pint) beef stock

A splash of dry white wine

2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

½ teaspoon dried thyme

100g (3oz) frozen peas

100g (3oz) grated cheddar cheese

Method

1. Place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 10-15 minutes or until tender. Drain, then shake potatoes over low heat for 1 minute to dry. Mash potatoes, gradually adding butter and enough milk to reach desired consistency. Stir in 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook the beef, onion, and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain.
3. Add tomato paste; cook for 2 minutes. Add the mushrooms, carrots, stock, wine, Worcestershire sauce and thyme. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until most of the liquid is evaporated. Stir in peas. Season with the remaining salt and pepper.
4. Transfer beef mixture to the slow cooker. Spread mashed potatoes over top. Cover and cook on Low for 5 – 6 hours or until bubbly. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and cook 10 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Serve hot.

Mushroom risotto



Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 1 ¾ hours

Ready in: 2 hours

Ingredients

2 tablespoons butter

125g (4oz) mushrooms (white, portabello or a mixture), thinly sliced

1 shallot or ¼ yellow onion, diced

1 garlic clove, minced

175g (6oz) Arborio rice

½ litre (1 pint) chicken broth

Salt and pepper for seasoning

75g (3oz) frozen peas

15g (½ oz) Parmesan cheese

Method

1. Melt the butter and cook the mushrooms, shallot and garlic over medium high heat for 5 minutes or until mushrooms have browned and liquid has evaporated.
2. Add in rice, stirring to coat for 2 minutes.
3. Spray the slow cooker with cooking spray and add rice mixture.
4. Pour in stock and season with salt and pepper.
5. Stir to combine and cook on High for 1 ½ hours or until rice is tender and liquid is mostly absorbed.
6. Add the peas and cook for a further 15 minutes.
7. Stir in Parmesan cheese, mix well and serve hot.

Apple cobbler



Serves 6

Preparation time: 30 mins

Cooking time: 2 hours

Ready in: 3 hours (including allowing 30 mins to stand before serving)

Ingredients

For the apple mixture:

8 Granny Smith apples

200g (7oz) packed light brown sugar

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

¼ teaspoon salt

For the crisp topping:

100g (3½ oz) old-fashioned oats

100g (3½ oz) whole wheat flour

100g (3½ oz) packed light brown sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

¼ teaspoon salt

120g (4oz) cold unsalted butter, cut into cubes

Method

Peel, core and slice the apples into ¼ inch slices.

Place sliced apples in the slow cooker. Add brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Stir with a non-metal spoon so as not to scratch the slow cooker insert.

In a large bowl, combine oats, flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Stir until well combined. Using your fingertips, work the butter into the oat mixture until the mixture starts to clump together.

Stir the apple mixture one more time and then spread apples out into an even layer. Sprinkle on the crisp topping.

Cook on High for 2 hours (or on low for 3 – 3½ hours), until apples are soft. Turn off heat and let stand for at least 30 minutes (keeping the lid on). Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Cinnamon raisin bread pudding



Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 4 hours

Ready in: 4 ¼ hours

Ingredients

8 pieces of cinnamon raisin bread, cut into cubes

240ml (1/2 pint) whole milk

2 eggs

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

3 tablespoons granulated sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Method

1. Place the cubed bread in the slow cooker.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients. Pour the mixture over the bread in the slow cooker. Let stand for 5 minutes until the bread absorbs the liquid.
3. Cover and cook on Low for 4 hours or until a knife inserted near the centre comes out clean. Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Triple chocolate and peanut butter cake



Serves 4
Preparation time: 15 mins
Cooking time: 2 hours
Ready in: 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours
(including 30 mins to let cool before serving)

Ingredients

For the chocolate batter:

130g (4½ oz) flour
70g (2½ oz) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
1½ teaspoons baking powder
120ml (¼ pint) chocolate milk
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

90g (3oz) peanut butter chips
90g (3oz) semisweet chocolate chips

For the chocolate sauce:

150g (5½ oz) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
350ml (1½ pints) boiling water

Method

1. Grease the inside of the slow cooker with cooking spray.
2. To make the chocolate batter, whisk together the flour, 70g sugar, 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder, baking powder, chocolate milk, vegetable oil, vanilla extract, peanut butter chips and chocolate chips. It will be thick. Spread in an even layer in the slow cooker.
3. Whisk the remaining sugar and cocoa powder into the boiling water. Carefully pour over the chocolate batter. Cover and cook on High for 2 hours. Turn off the heat and let the cake cool for 30 minutes before serving.

These recipes have been compiled by Seniors Helping Seniors in Harrow, Pinner and Northwood. We invite you to get in touch to find out more about how we can help you or your loved one. Find out more by visiting (www.seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk), call for a no obligation chat about service in Harrow on 020 3876 0676 or e-mail harrow@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk