



COOKING 101

REAL FOOD MADE SIMPLE

*with Olivia Borer*

**WEEK 7: CASSEROLES**

# WEEK 7 PLAN

## **VIDEO: Introduction to Casseroles**

Casseroles are a comfort food favorite, but they aren't always healthy. In this week, we transform the traditional casserole stereotype with The Most Versatile Casserole, which is not only healthy, but also highly customizable.

## **VIDEO: The Most Versatile Casserole**

In this video, I walk you through how to make The Most Versatile Casserole from start to finish. We will also discuss the various modifications you can use to make this recipe customized to your preferences.

## **PDF: The Most Versatile Casserole Base Recipe + Modifications & Options**

While the base recipe for this casserole is amazing, it is always good to add variety and switch it up! Use this recipe to help swap in or out vegetables and meat that suit your preferences.

## **PDF: Casserole FAQs**

Learn more about which pans to use, why this casserole does not need noodles or a sauce to be delicious, and how to properly mash vegetables.



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**THE MOST VERSATILE  
CASSEROLE BASE RECIPE**

# THE MOST VERSATILE CASSEROLE BASE RECIPE

*Cook Time: 45-50 minutes*  
*Servings: 4-6*

## INGREDIENTS

- 1.5-2lbs Ground Meat of Choice (Chicken, Beef, Turkey, or Pork)
- 1lb Carrots (see next page)
- 1lb Green Beans (see next page)
- 1 Yellow Onion (see next page)
- 1 Medium Butternut Squash (see next page)
- 1 Tbsp Sea Salt, Divided
- 1 Tsp Garlic Powder
- 1/2 Tsp Black Pepper
- 4 Tbsp Butter, Ghee, or Coconut Oil, divided



A combo of two ground meats creates a great flavor, especially pork and beef.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375-400 degrees. Line a square 9"x9" or 8"x11" baking dish with parchment paper.
2. Peel and cut the butternut squash into cubes. Place in a pan with 1" of water and a steamer basket.
3. Steam until tender, about 10-15 minutes.
4. Alternatively, follow the instructions in week 5 to steam the squash in the Instant Pot.
5. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add 2 Tbsp of the cooking fat of choice.
6. Prepare and add the vegetables to the pan: peel and dice/slice the carrots, dice the onion, and cut the green beans into 1" pieces.
7. Add in half the spices and cover and cook until the vegetables are slightly tender, about 5-8 minutes, stirring occasionally.
8. Add in the ground meat and the remaining spices. Cook, covered, until the meat is cooked through.
9. Drain the butternut squash, add a sprinkle of salt and remaining 2 Tbsp of cooking fat. Mash with a potato masher or immersion blender.
10. Assemble the casserole - add the vegetable and meat mixture to the bottom of the casserole dish. Top with the butternut squash.
11. Bake until lightly browned, about 30 minutes.

# THE MOST VERSATILE CASSEROLE BASE RECIPE

## INGREDIENT OPTIONS

- For the onion, you can use a yellow or sweet onion or a shallot for a milder flavor. You can also omit the onion if desired.
- For the carrots, you can use diced or small slices of parsnips, potatoes, sweet potatoes, or any other root vegetable. Frozen cauliflower rice works very well too, but add it after the meat is almost cooked through.
- For the green beans, you can use chopped kale or spinach (add spinach after the meat is cooked through), frozen peas (add peas after the meat is cooked through), or shredded Brussels sprouts.
- For the butternut squash, you can use any vegetable that can be mashed such as parsnips, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, or any other root vegetable.
- For the ground meat, I prefer ground beef, but any combination of ground beef, chicken, turkey, or pork works great. Do not use super lean cuts of meat as it adds good flavor to the casserole.

## CASSEROLE OPTIONS

- Ground beef and pork, frozen peas, carrots, and onion with mashed potatoes.
- Ground beef, frozen peas, carrots, and mashed potatoes (kid friendly!).
- Ground pork, parsnips, green beans, and onion with mashed sweet potatoes.
- Ground chicken, cauliflower rice, green beans, onion with mashed parsnips.
- Ground turkey, cauliflower rice, kale, onion, and mashed butternut squash.
- Ground pork and turkey, carrots, green beans, onion, and mashed cauliflower.
- Ground beef, green beans, kale, and onion with mashed potatoes.

*Make it your own! It truly can be as customizable as you choose to make it.*

# CASSEROLES FAQs

## What Pan Do I Use?

- I prefer a ceramic glass baking dish that is between 9"x9" or 8"x11".
- Line it with parchment paper for easy cleanup, use a cooking spray that is 100% coconut, avocado, or olive oil (no soy or vegetable oils), or spread a bit of melted ghee, butter, or coconut oil in the pan to prevent sticking to the pan.
- This recipe doubles very easily, so you can use several 9"x13" pans as needed.

## What About Noodles?

- Most conventional casseroles have added noodles or pasta, which really aren't necessary. Instead, load this casserole up with vegetables that your family likes and allow the flavors to come together without a grain-based noodle!

## Don't I Need a Sauce?

- Many casseroles have a tomato or creamy base, but not so here. Instead, using a cut of ground meat that has natural fat in it (avoiding super lean cuts of meat) will help keep the casserole from drying out.

## How Do I Mash the Vegetables?

- A potato masher works well for vegetables that are pretty tender. A hand-held immersion blender will work, as well as a food processor. But, to not dirty another kitchen appliance, stick with the potato masher or even a wooden spoon.