



COOKING 101

REAL FOOD MADE SIMPLE

with Olivia Borer

WEEK 5: INSTANT POT

WEEK 5 PLAN

VIDEO: Introduction to the Instant Pot

The Instant Pot is an item many of us have in our kitchens but often never use! While I am not the expert in Instant Pot cooking, there are several amazing ways to use the Instant Pot to cut down on cook time, add an extra "pot" to your stove, or use it as a slow cooker.

VIDEO: How to Use the Instant Pot + Recipes

In this video, I walk you through how to use the main functions of the Instant Pot (such as the delay start feature), as well as cook shredded chicken and spaghetti squash.

PDF: Instant Pot Recipes

This collection of Instant Pot recipes is by no means extensive, but will provide a great starting point for using your Instant Pot. The recipes include shredded chicken thighs, cooked spaghetti squash, mashed vegetables, hamburger beef soup, and homemade bone broth.

PDF: Instant Pot FAQs

Learn more about the specific functions of the Instant Pot and start the journey of experimenting with this amazing tool yourself!



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INSTANT POT RECIPES

SHREDDED CHICKEN

Cook Time: 30-60 minutes
Servings: 4-8+

INGREDIENTS

- 1-5lbs Chicken (see note)
- 1 Tbsp Sea Salt
- Other Spices of Choice
- Water

Try a blend of chili powder, cumin, and paprika for spicy, or Italian seasoning for a basic flavor. Otherwise, plain salt works great!

DIRECTIONS

1. Add the chicken to the Instant Pot.
2. Sprinkle with sea salt and spices of choice.
3. Add enough water so about 1" is standing at the bottom (about 1-2 cups)
4. Using the "Meat" or "Poultry" button, cook for about 8-12 minutes per pound (see note).
5. Once the chicken is finished cooking, allow to sit without releasing pressure for 10-15 minutes.
6. Carefully release the pressure by turning the nozzle and remove the lid.
7. Strain the chicken, reserving the broth if desired for future use; shred with tongs.
8. Serve, portion out, or freeze as desired.

NOTES

- I prefer to use **boneless, skinless chicken thighs** in this recipe. However, boneless, skinless chicken breasts or tenderloins work as well. Also, chicken drumsticks work great, but you will have to do more work to remove the chicken from the bones after cooking (once they've cooled). Whole chickens will take a little longer to cook, but also work really well. Save the bones from the drumsticks or whole chicken to make bone broth.
- I typically cook 5lbs of thighs for 42 minutes, 5lbs of breasts for 45 min, lbs of tenderloins for 40 minutes, 5lb of drumsticks for 45 minutes, and a whole chicken for 42-47 minutes depending on size. Cooking from frozen will increase the temperatures and may result in uneven cooking.
- Use the shredded chicken in soup, salad, casserole, or pair with roasted vegetables and avocado.
- This chicken freezes so well for future use. Simply cool and freeze in a freezer bag or glass storage container for up to 3 months.

BONE BROTH

Cook Time: 3-5 hours
Servings: 4-8+

INGREDIENTS

- 1-3lbs Chicken or Beef Bones
- 1 Tbsp Sea Salt
- Other Spices of Choice
- Water or Leftover Broth from Cooking Chicken
- 1 Tsp Apple Cider Vinegar (optional)

If you can find them, chicken feet work wonderfully for making a super healthy broth. Otherwise, leftover bones will work well.

DIRECTIONS

1. Add the chicken or beef bones to the Instant Pot.
2. Sprinkle with sea salt and spices of choice, along with the apple cider vinegar.
3. Add enough water so the Instant Pot is two-thirds full. If you have leftover broth from cooking chicken, that works even better than water.
4. Using the "Soup" button, cook for 2-4 hours.
5. Allow to cool at least 20-30 minutes before releasing pressure.
6. Strain, discarding the bones, and allow the broth to cool before freezing for storing.
7. Once stored, the broth may develop a layer of fat across the top. Discard that before using the broth.

NOTES

- Save those bones! When I cook chicken, I save the bones in a freezer bag until I have enough to make a good sized batch of broth.
- If your broth turns gelatinous when cold, you have yourself a collagen-rich, healthy broth!
- Bone broth can be used for cooking and mashing vegetables, soup, or simply drinking on its own.
- Store bone broth in freezer bags or glass storage containers in the freezer for future use.

SPAGHETTI SQUASH

Cook Time: 20-30 minutes
Servings: 2-4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Spaghetti Squash
- Water

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the spaghetti squash in half width-wise by putting your knife halfway into the skin and turning the squash in a full circle. Do not try to cut lengthwise.
2. Add the spaghetti squash to the Instant Pot.
3. Add 1" of standing water to the Instant Pot.
4. Using the "Manual" button, cook for 12-18 minutes (see note).
5. If desired, allow to cool 5 minutes before releasing pressure, although you can release pressure after cooking if needed. Stand clear of nozzle.
6. Carefully remove the squash halves with tongs, resting on a plate to cool.
7. Once cooled slightly, remove the seeds with a spoon (they should fall right out).
8. Serve or cook as desired (see note).

NOTES

- Cook times: for a larger squash that is slightly overlapping, cook closer to 18 minutes. For a smaller squash, cook 12-14 minutes. If you like a slightly crunchy, less tender squash, reduce cooking time. If you like the squash to be cooked thoroughly, cook longer.
- Because spaghetti squash is watery, you can remove the strands from the skin and saute in a skillet with ghee, butter, or coconut oil and sea salt for 8-10 minutes to remove some of the moisture and add more flavor.
- Spaghetti squash can be frozen once cooked, but it doesn't hold up very well and becomes more watery and mushy.

HAMBURGER VEGETABLE SOUP

Cook Time: 25-35 minutes
Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5-2lbs Ground Beef, Cooked (see note)
- 1lb Carrots
- 4-5 Stalks Celery
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 2-3 Russet Potatoes
- 28oz Diced Tomatoes
- 1 Tbsp Minced Garlic
- 2-3 Cups Homemade or Store Bought Chicken Bone Broth (see additional recipe for homemade)
- 1/2 Tsp Black Pepper
- Sea Salt to Taste

Any variety of potato will work - russet, gold, red, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. In the Instant Pot, add the ground beef, tomatoes, garlic, broth, and spices.
2. Prep and add the vegetables: peel and cut the carrots into 1/2" coins, cut the celery into 1/2" pieces, medium dice the onion, and small-medium dice the potatoes.
3. Put the lid on and select the "Soup/Stew" button for 18-20 minutes or the "Slow Cook" button for 6-8 hours.
4. Once finished cooking, if using the "Soup/Stew" button, allow the Instant Pot to rest about 10 minutes before releasing pressure.

NOTES

- If desired, cook the ground beef in the Instant Pot before adding the rest of the ingredients.
- With the lid off, click "Saute" and add the ground beef with a layer of sea salt.
- Saute until almost cooked through (some pink is fine) before cooking as directed.

MASHED VEGETABLES

Cook Time: 20-30 minutes
Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 2-4 Cups Vegetable of Choice (see note)
- 1 Tbsp Sea Salt
- Other Spices of Choice
- Water _____ →
- 2 Tbsp Butter, Ghee, or Coconut Oil

Use bone
broth if you
have it on
hand!

DIRECTIONS

1. Add the vegetables to the Instant Pot.
2. Add 1" of standing water or broth to the Instant Pot.
3. Using the "Manual" button, cook for 12-25 minutes (see note).
4. If desired, allow to cool 5 minutes before releasing pressure, although you can release pressure after cooking if needed. Stand clear of nozzle.
5. Drain the excess liquid, reserving it in case it's needed.
6. Add the butter, sea salt, and spices. Mash with a potato masher, food processor, or immersion blender, adding in a little reserved liquid or homemade broth if needed.

NOTES

- Cut all vegetables into 1-2" pieces. Vegetables like cauliflower (a non-starchy vegetable) needs less cooking time, about 12-15 minutes. Denser, starchy vegetables like potatoes or butternut squash will cook longer, up to 18-25 minutes, depending on how full the pot is.
- Cooking the vegetables in broth will make for an even richer, deeper flavor.
- The best vegetables for mashing include: cauliflower, potatoes (any variety), sweet potatoes, parsnips, carrots, turnips, butternut squash, or any other root vegetable. Hearty vegetables are best; something like zucchini or broccoli won't work quite as well.

INSTANT POT FAQs

How to Use

1. Plug the Instant Pot in and remove the lid.
2. Add in whatever you are cooking. Make sure there is a little bit of liquid, about 1 cup or more.
3. Put the lid back on and move the nozzle so the it is closed/straight, not turned.
4. Select the proper button for cooking. The most common are: "Meat/Poultry," "Soup/Stew," "Manual/Pressure Cook," or "Slow Cook." See the video in this module for more information.
5. Change the cook time by adjusting the time on the screen. When you have the correct time selected, let the Instant Pot sit for 10 seconds to set the time.
6. The Instant Pot will beep three times when it has started coming to pressure.
7. Once finished cooking, the Instant Pot will beep 10 times.
8. Most recipes will tell you whether or not to let the Instant Pot rest for a few minutes before releasing pressure (longer for soups/stews, not at all for slow cooker meals). Regardless, I typically wait at least 5 minutes before releasing pressure unless explicitly instructed otherwise. The Instant Pot automatically goes to "Keep Warm" until the lid is removed.
9. Carefully move the nozzle to release pressure, using a towel if needed (hot steam will come out!).
10. Allow the Instant Pot to completely release pressure which will unlock the lid.

Using the Instant Pot takes some trial and error. When in doubt, aim a little less on the time you might need - you can always add another 2-5 minutes as needed! I keep a log of what I cook and how long it takes in my Instant Pot for reference.

How to Delay Start

- Follow the steps above through step 5.
- Before the Instant Pot beeps three times to set the time, then click "Delay Start" and adjust the time accordingly, typically no longer than 2-3 hours unless the meat/mixture is partially frozen.
- The Instant Pot will delay for the set amount of time before switching to the main cooking method and time.
- Follow steps 7-10.