

Marion's Meals By David Abbott

Second Edition

First Published April 11th, 2022

Second Edition May 11th, 2022

Web: www.marionsmeals.com

Email: hello@marionsmeals.com

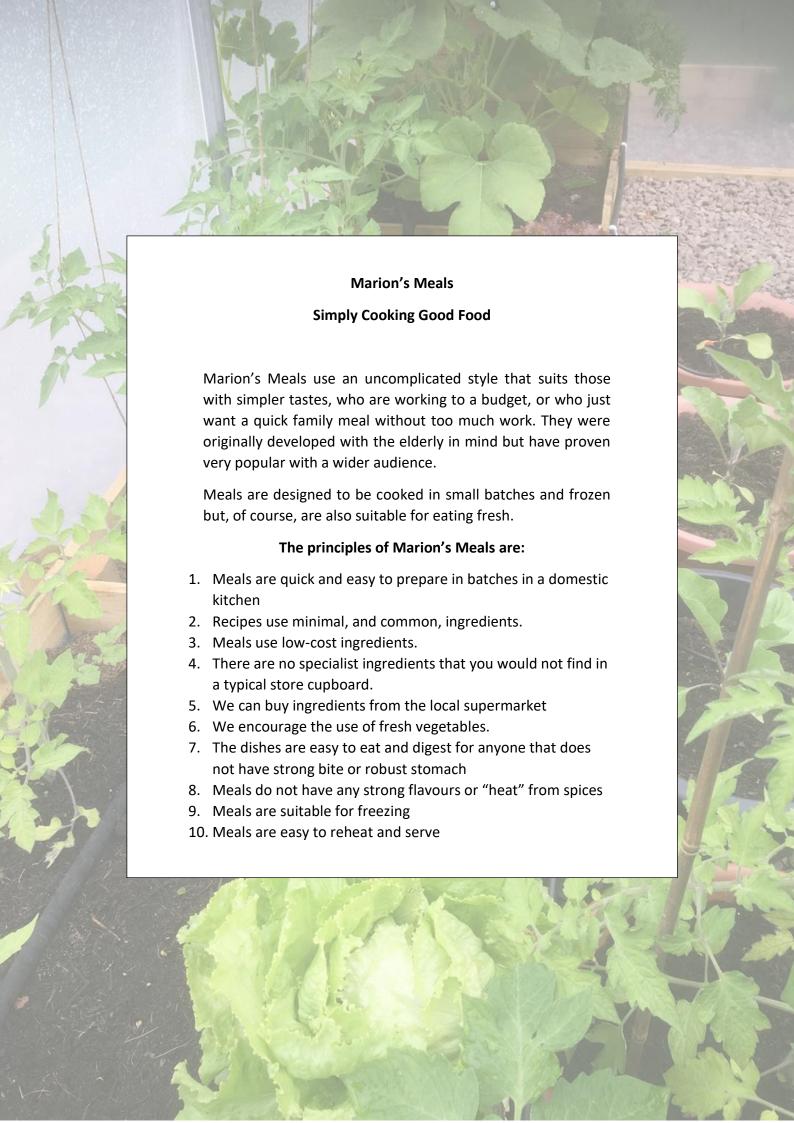
Marion's Meals is Not for Profit

Support: GoFundMe (Search for Marion's Meals)

Facebook: Search for David Abbott Marion's Meals

Also available online or as individual recipe cards.

© 2020, 2021, 2022



Contents

	Roast Potato	43
Marion's Meals7	Tattie Scone	45
Introduction7	Soups	48
Main Principles7	Beef & Onion Soup	49
Other Requirements7	Butternut Squash Soup	51
Why Cook for Freezing?8	Cabbage Soup	53
Using the Recipes8	Carrot and Courgette Soup	55
Acknowledgements 8	Carrot and Sweet Pepper Soup	57
Pass it Forward9	Chicken & Sweetcorn Soup	59
Changes and Additions9	Chicken, Leek & Potato Soup	61
Mailing List9	Courgette & Potato Soup	63
Supporting Marion's Meals9	Cullen Skink	65
Techniques10	French Cabbage Soup	67
Browning Mince12	French Onion Soup	69
Cooking, Storing & Heating13	Garden Vegetable Soup	71
Food Safety15	Leek & Potato Soup	73
Getting Organised16	Leek, Potato & Rice Soup	75
Grease and Flour Loaf Tin17	Lentil Soup	77
Heating Marion's Meals18	Minestrone	79
Lining a Baking Tray19	Parsnip Soup	81
Roasting Squashes20	Pea & Ham Soup	83
Selecting a Potato Variety21	Red Cabbage Soup	85
Serving Containers22	Tomato & Lentil Soup	87
Slicing & Dicing Chicken Breast23	Tomato & Rice Soup	89
Slicing & Dicing Onion24	Tomato Soup	91
Slicing & Dicing Potato25	Vegetable Soup	93
Store Cupboard27	Main Meals	96
Topping With Mashed Potato28	Balmoral Chicken	97
Washing Lentils29	Bean Stew	99
Weight Conversion30	Beef Hotpot	101
Sides, Sauces and Accompaniments 32	Beef Olives	103
Hash Brown33	Bolognaise	105
Mashed Potato35	Breakfast in a Box	107
Onion Gravy37	Chicken & Leek Pie	109
Potato Wedges39	Chicken & Sweetcorn	111
Puff Pastry 41	Chicken Casserole	113

	Chicken & Water Chestnuts	115
	Cottage Pie (Beef)	117
	Farmer's Pie (Pork)	119
	Fillet Steak & Black Beans	121
	Fish Pie	123
	Haggis, Neeps & Tatties	125
	Meatballs	127
	Mince & Tatties	129
	Pork Casserole	131
	"Roast" Beef – Slow Cooked	133
	Sausage Casserole	135
	Sausage & Potato Pie	137
	Shepherd's Pie (Lamb)	139
	Shepherd's Pie (Turkey)	141
	St David's Chicken	143
	Stovies	145
3	Cakes & Biscuits	148
	Biscuits	149
	Cup (Fairy) Cakes	151
	Fruit Loaf	153
	Lemon Drizzle Cake	155
	Mars Bar No-Bake Tray Bake	157
	Melting Moments	159
	Muffins	161
	Raisin & Nut Crumble Slice	163

Marion's Meals

Introduction

Marion, my mother-in-law, is in her "senior years", lives alone and is not able to get out of the house.

Marion's Meals is a series of recipes in a style of uncomplicated ready meals that are usually frozen but can also be eaten fresh.

Marion tried many ready meals from major supermarkets and home delivery companies but kept asking for "home cooking".

Marion's Meals now has an extensive catalogue of soups, meals, sides and a few sweet treats. Sauces and desserts may follow.

Of course, these recipes are not exclusively for Marion and many other folks have benefited from these meals!

Some folks just like the simplicity of the recipes and use them for their own family.

Main Principles

Marion's Meals are a based four main principles:

- 1. Meals must be quick and easy to make in batches, in a domestic kitchen.
- 2. Meals must use minimal, and common, Ingredients. Recipes are stripped to the basics.
- 3. Meals must be suitable for freezing.
- 4. Meals must be easy to reheat, serve and eat.

Other Requirements

The main principles are based on Marion's main requirements, but she has other requirements that we were also able to accommodate.

- The meals must not have strong flavours or have any level of heat from spices.
- Seasoning must be used very sparingly.
- The dishes must be easy to eat and digest for anyone that does not have a strong bite or a robust stomach.

This results in meals that may seem bland as they lack a bit of the flavour or the depth you would expect in main-stream recipes.

The meals are mostly "made from scratch" so you can add seasoning, herbs, and other flavours to the basic dishes to suit your own tastes.

I added a few other principles to apply when doing the cooking.

- I shall source local ingredients with many of the vegetables coming from my own garden.
- There are no specialist ingredients. They are available in a typical domestic store cupboard.
- I can buy everything I need from the local small supermarket.
- I feel no shame for using bought sauces or using other shortcuts.

I try to cook meals that are healthy and have a bit of variety. I am not a nutritionist so I might get that wrong. Of course, I also want to make meals that Marion will eat and enjoy.

I have cooked for Marion's needs and have not considered other people that may be vegetarian, vegan or have food allergies. You need to be aware of that if you use my recipes.

I am not a professional cook, but I have been amateur cooking for decades.

Why Cook for Freezing?

The original concept of Marion's Meals was targeted at an individual (me!) cooking meals to give to one person, Marion!

I wanted to fill the freezers so that I could offer Marion a choice of meals for each weekly delivery, with meals that I knew Marion would enjoy.

However, I did not want to be cooking every day – or even every week. This proved a fortunate approach during the times I was unable to cook. I could still arrange deliveries from meals I had in the freezers.

The recipes will focus on small batch cooking for freezing, usually from 4 to 12 portions per recipe.

Despite the focus on freezing meals, the recipes still work well for eating fresh.

Using the Recipes

Each recipe sheet is laid out the same way and includes:

- Ingredients
- Options
- Equipment Required
- Preparation
- Method
- Notes & Tips
- Portions
- Storing
- Heating & Serving
- Techniques and Principles

I have also tried to include photographs of the preparation, cooking, and finished dish.

Many recipes work just as well if you use slightly different ingredients or quantities. Some do not, particularly when it comes to the sweet treats and baking.

In some of these recipes I have added a Test Kitchen section where I try to break the recipe and show the results of straying from the original recipe.

There is more about Test Kitchen on the Marion's Meals website.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Susan Brown who unknowingly inspired me to write Marion's Meals and who helped me over the years with testing so many of the recipes.

Thanks also to "my maw" for giving me the help as a child to understand the benefits and methods for this style of cooking.

Thanks to Helen, Adam and Douglas for their suggestions, support, and motivation, to help me complete Marion's Meals.

Thanks finally to those that have bought a recipe book or who have donated to Marion's Meals. This helps me provide recipe books, free of charge, to carers, those working on a budget or those that just want to get into cooking for the first time.

Pass it Forward

Marion's Meals is not a business or a charity – It is simply an attempt to pass on my experience so that others may benefit.

You are encouraged to use any of these recipes for yourself or for any vulnerable people you look out for, free of royalties - (ha, ha – as if!) – just don't try to make any money from them!

I'm also happy for you to share these recipes, I may even be able to send folks a copy of the series in a snazzy binder or as a bound book.

Changes and Additions

I'm happy, even keen, to build on and share these recipes.

If you have any suggestions for additions to the series, please email me with the name of your suggested dish.

You are not required to, but it would help, if you also gave me the recipe - or at least an idea of the ingredients list.

Note, however, I may tweak your idea or recipe to suit the principles of Marion's Meals and your only reward for contributing is your name mentioned on the recipe sheet.

I have cooked every recipe in the series – many times – but I can't be sure I have found every error in the printed copy!

If you use the recipes and find a mistake in my write-up or you would like to share feedback on your results, please let me know so I can continually improve Marion's Meals.

Mailing List

If you are added to the mailing list, I will keep you informed about updates and changes.

Sign up at www.marionsmeals.com or email me at hello@marionsmeals.com.

Supporting Marion's Meals

These recipes are all available for use, free of charge, but if you like the concept or the recipes, you are invited to donate to the CGS Philanthropy Fund as a wee thank you.

This can be a one-off donation, or even just a pound or two, here and there. Of course, a regular small donation (via Standing Order) is the most efficient way to donate.

Donations are absolutely, 100%, voluntary and not required.

If you are willing and able to contribute to the charity fund, the best place is via the Marion's Meals website that has a link to GoFundMe.

Alternatively, email hello@marionsmeals.com and you will receive bank details for a direct donation or Standing Order.

At this time, 2022, Marion's Meals is not a registered charity so if you are not happy contributing, don't!

The CGS Philanthropy Fund was set up by a small group of ten friends that make contributions at every golf outing or poker game

they attend. They have also arranged special charity matches to help support the fund.

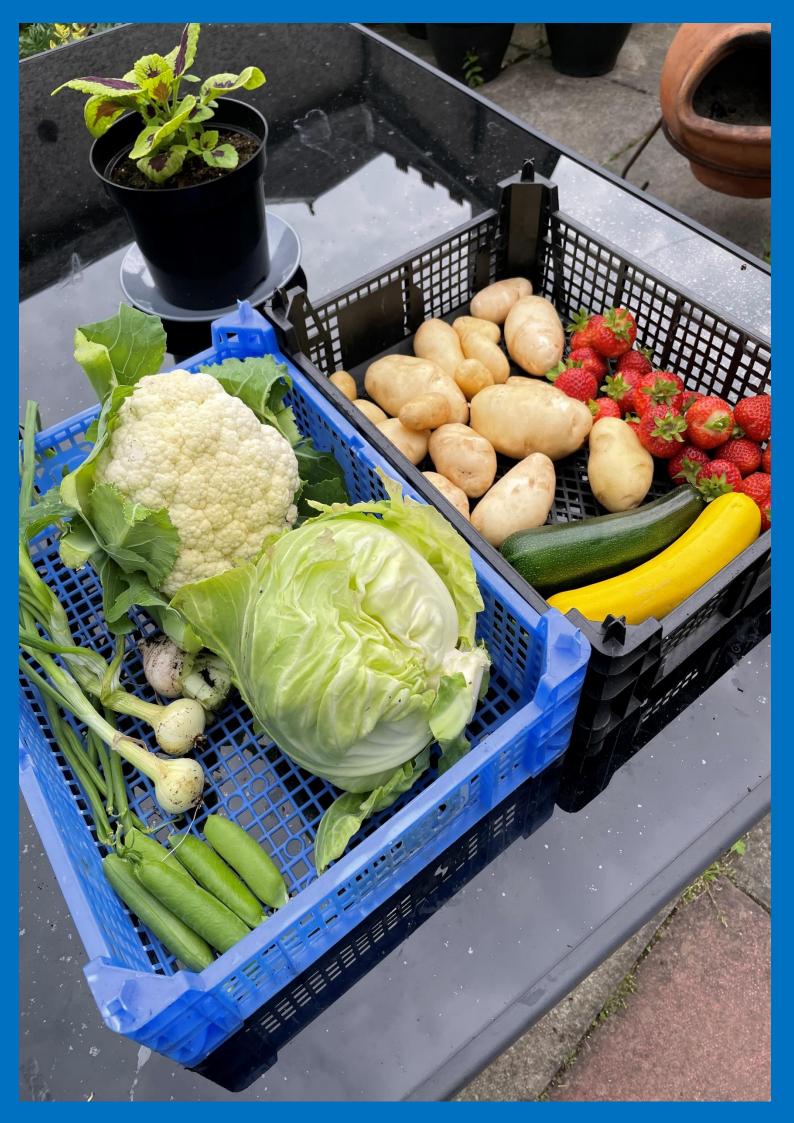
The CGS Guys contributed and donated over £5,000 between 2011 and 2021.

The winner of the annual CGS Golf Championship selects the beneficiary for the year. This has included:

- Help For Heroes
- CHAS (Twice)
- SUDEP (Epilepsy)
- FMB Acute Endowment Fund
- Cancer Research Scotland (Twice)
- Alzheimer's Scotland
- Foetal Meds Ward, Victoria Hospital
- Teenage Cancer Trust

Techniques

Browning Mince	
Cooking, Storing & Heating	
Food Safety	15
Getting Organised	
Grease and Flour Loaf Tin	
Heating Marion's Meals	18
Lining a Baking Tray	19
Roasting Squashes	20
Selecting a Potato Variety	21
Serving Containers	22
Slicing & Dicing Chicken Breast	
Slicing & Dicing Onion	24
Slicing & Dicing Potato	
Store Cupboard	27
Topping With Mashed Potato	28
Washing Lentils	29
Weight Conversion	30



Browning Mince

Introduction

I guess the first question is "why bother?" There are a few reasons:

- It does bring out the flavours better
- It gives it a better colour
- It separates the mince into the small bits of mince rather than leave it in clumps, much like meatballs!

Many recipes I've seen suggest that we brown mince and cook it quickly by frying. Marion's Meals relies on cooking the mince by boiling after browning.

When you boil mince, you will add more flavours and ingredients so whether you fry or boil the mince is less relevant but you will get a different texture.

I use low fat mince.

Browning Mince by Frying

Add a very small amount of oil or butter to a frying pan over a medium heat - but not until it is smoking hot.

Add a small amount of mince – don't cover the bottom of the pan completely.

Avoid over-stirring the mince as it fries. Allow the mince to develop a decent brown colour before breaking it up and turning.

Tip the cooked mince into a bowl or pan once browned. Keep going in small batches until all the mince is browned.

You are advised to clean the oil and burnt bits from the frying pan between batches as they can easily burn on the next batch – giving a bad taste.

You could keep the used oil and meat bits for your main cook or for making a sauce.

You then add the cooked mince to your cottage pie, bridies, bolognaise or another mince-based dish.

The biggest batch I've cooked this way was about 10lb (5kg) and it took ages!

Browning Mince for Boiling

We are not trying to cook the mince. We just want to separate and brown it.

Put a splash of oil or butter in the pan and melt on a low to medium heat.

Add the mince is batches of around 250g (about ½ pound – a handful). When I've been in a rush, I've done it with as much as 1kg at a time, but it's harder to work. My advice? Work in batches!

Don't be afraid to get in there with your spatula to break up the mince and turn it over. Once it starts to brown, it should all brown quickly.

Check to make sure there are no lumps of mince. The lumps will have red and cold spots in the middle so break them up with your spatula.

Larger Quantities

As each batch starts to brown, you can add more mince to the pot for browning.

This is not recommended as the first batch will be in the pot much longer than the last batch.

You should brown the mince in batches in a smaller pot and transfer each batch of browned mince to a larger pot for cooking.

Repeat until you have all your mince browned.





Once all the mince is browned, cover with water, bring to the boil and simmer for cooking. Check the individual recipes to see what vegetables or other ingredients you need to add.

Cooking, Storing & Heating

Kitchen

I prepared all these meals in a domestic kitchen. Obviously, if I had a very small kitchen, I may only work on one or two recipes at a time.

My kitchen is medium size, but I have a range cooker with plenty rings and ovens. This lets me work on 5 or 6 recipes at a time – much more productive for me but I had to get myself organised!

I have needed to make as much as 40 or 50 meals or soups in a single day although I tend to work in smaller batches now.

In the kitchen, I need enough space to keep fresh and cooked foods separate, and plenty space to portion the meals for freezing.

Kitchen and food safety are obviously very important to me, particularly if I am cooking for an elderly or vulnerable person.

Equipment

There is not that much in the way of special equipment required to make these meals. Basic things such as knives, spatulas, scales, bowls, mixer, hand-blender etc were already in the kitchen.

There were some things that I purchased specifically for making Marion's Meals.

Bagging Machine

This is a bag sealing machine — the sort you get in the butchers - for adding a plastic tape to the bag. This allowed me to prepare spare veg into small batches for freezing.



Food Thermometer

I'm paranoid about food safety and always, always, check the temperature of food that I am reheating so I can provide accurate timing, temperatures and instructions for Marion.

Labelling Machine

This one I didn't buy, I had it left over from a previous business venture. It is so helpful when you've spent a full day cooking and you have 50 meals to label. If my labeller breaks, I will definitely buy another one!

Storing

Freezer space quickly become a problem, so I did purchase a third "under-the-counter" size freezer. I tried to organise stuff by freezer, one each for cooked Main Meals, one for Soups and the third for ingredients, veg and uncooked meats. It didn't last long as I had to use every space!

Some of the serving trays were an awkward size for storing. Whereas I could get 6 plastic tubs per layer in a freezer drawer, I could only get 1 of the 3-cell trays per layer unless I mixed in small foil trays in the same drawer.

This improved when I found a 3-cell container that had a different size.

During the experience of developing and cooking Marion's Meal I did have some mistakes — can I call them "Learning Opportunities"? Mistakes will happen but I try to learn from them. I might add these stories to the website.

Recipes were also tweaked and I discovered that the quantities were not really that important for some recipes. I was happy to just guess or use gutfeel after a while! But not for all recipes.

Cooking

Meals are cooked in batches with somewhere between 4 and 12 portions for a single recipe. This can lead to a "big cook" every few weeks where 6 or 8 recipes are cooked at the same time resulting in 30 or 40 portions being added to the freezer. Each month I may need 60 portions of soups and meals for each "customer" that was dependent on Marion's Meals.

I look to deliver 7 different main meals and 7 different soups every week – and not the same 7 each week.

Packaging

Meals are cooked in batches with meals frozen as single-serve portions;

- large plastic containers, (Takeaway style)
- small foil trays,
- large foil trays, or,
- 3-Cell plastic trays

The choice of container tends to depend on whether the meal is re-heated in the microwave or a conventional oven.

Sometimes a "meal" will be a single self-contained container – such as soups or Cottage Pie.

Other times, we bring together multiple containers to build the meal. For example, Beef Olives in the main tray, and a serving of vegetables and potatoes in their own containers.

Every container is labelled with the name of the meal, the ingredients, the packaged date and the heating instructions (if not-standard heating).

Shepherd's Pie (Lamb)

18-Jan-2022

Lamb Mince - Onion - Carrot - Peas - Turnip Mashed Potato - Schwartz Sauce - - -

50

THAW OVERNIGHT BEFORE COOKING

Pre-heat oven to 180 degrees, Gas Mark 5
Remove lid and place on a baking sheet
Cook for 40 minutes until piping hot and cooked throughout
Do not re-freeze once thawed
Not suitable for microwave cooking

The number is a reference to the catalogue entry of the meal, allowing Marion to make a simple list of meals she was requesting. There are alternative versions of some meals, and they have a suffix to the main number.

Storing

Meals are intended to be frozen but can, obviously, be eaten fresh.

Meals that are delivered fresh must be stored in the fridge and consumed within 24 hours of delivery.

Heating

There is no need for a cooker or stove top. Marion has lost confidence for using direct heat from a stove top, and therefore does not have one.

Note: You will see that some dishes can be reheated on the stove-top but this is not detailed in the instructions.

Our options for heating Marion's Meals are microwave or conventional oven.

Microwave is good for soups, potatoes, vegetables and many single-container-meals.

Conventional oven is good for meals that have a mashed potato top that you want to get browned.

Conventional oven is also required for roast potatoes, crumbles and the like.

Re-heating and serving the meals does not require any cooking skills.

The meal can be transferred to a heated plate for serving, but often they can be eaten directly from the container.

The series of recipes does include a few meals just for me – they are maybe a bit too exotic or spicy for Marion! These will feature in the sequel to Marion's Meals.

Most meals are very economical to make, but there are one or two included for special occasions. They rely on more expensive ingredients.

Food Safety

Introduction

If you are going to do a lot of cooking, whether that be for your loved ones, for a charity event or a family party, you should consider your responsibility towards those that are to consume your food.

If you are cooking for other people, you have a duty of care to them, and potentially some legal exposure if you negligently cause someone to become unwell.

A food safety training course may be well worth the little effort required. These can be done in your own time, at your own pace, at a low cost.

Many venues such as community halls, bowls clubs or golf clubs will not permit you to do your own catering for an event unless you have formal food safety training and/or Public Liability Insurance.

You need to consider safety in many areas of providing food for others:

- Selecting and Storing Ingredients
- Preparing to Cook
- Cooking
- Packing
- Chilling
- Freezing
- Storing
- Transporting
- Heating
- Serving

You also need to consider:

- Kitchen Layout & Facilities
- Equipment and Utensils
- Storage
- Pest Control
- Cloths and Cleaning
- Other people "helping"

It's not as complicated as it sounds – and a lot of it is common sense. I would still recommend some formal training (and Certification).

Food safety and hygiene for Private Parties

Providing food safely for a large amount of people without any previous food handling experience or training is an undertaking that is not recommended to any event organiser.

Every year, people who are not used to catering for large numbers, hire halls and organise big private parties or functions. Food is often prepared in several private houses by several individuals well in advance of the event and then separately transported to the venue.

What are acceptable practices in your kitchen for your own family at home, are not acceptable when catering on a large scale.

Safe food preparation, handling and transportation should be your number one priority along with the health of all your guests.

If food is contaminated or bacteria are given a chance to multiply, it might turn out to be a "night to remember" for all the wrong reasons! A food poisoning outbreak can be disruptive for all the households involved.

We've probably all seen high profile cases of food poisoning in the news and the devastating effect that has on families, if you are in any doubt about providing catering safely, leave well alone and hire a professional caterer.

For those saying "we've always done the catering in the past" and "we've never had any problems" we would warn against complacency!

Links to free food safety publications, and up to date news covering all aspects of food hygiene are available from the Local Authority or the internet.

Your Local Authority or Food Standards Agency will have resources online that can help.

Search online for "Food Safety Training". In 2022 there were dozens of on-line courses offered – some for as little as £10 and 90 minutes of your time! Ok, not comprehensive training but a start.

Getting Organised

Letting Marion choose

I gave Marion the list of available meals, asking her to choose what she wanted. I didn't always have an item ready in the freezer but it did let me know what to cook next. It also let me know what Marion did not want!

Eventually, Marion gave up on this and just wanted me to bring her a selection each week.

I still think it is important to let Marion choose so I do go back to this from time to time.

The folly of stock control

I tried to keep track of every dish going into and out of the freezers but it became an administrative nightmare. Now I do a quick "stocktake" every few weeks to decide what will be included in the next "Big Cook".

Equipment

Make sure you have the equipment ready and working before you start. It's too late to find your blender is broken if you have a gallon of soup to blitz!

Ingredients

Check you have all the ingredients laid out before you start. Nothing worse than heading to the supermarket at 9pm on a cold dark night – just for that vital ingredient!

Preparing ingredients.

Get all the peeling, chopping, measuring done before you start to handle raw meats. This is more efficient and is also much better to reduce the chances of cross-contamination.

Chilling before freezing

I guess this needs no clarification!

Pre-cleaning kitchen

Goes without saying. Clear the decks and clean everything before and after you cook.

Use antibacterial cleaners on your work surfaces.

Wash your hands regularly.

Get rid of any dirty cloths.

Clean-as-you-go

Keep the kitchen safe and clean, give yourself space to work and avoid the tiresome "big-clean" after hours of the "big cook".

Food hygiene training

It may be worth doing an on-line course if you are new to cooking or if you are cooking for others. These are very low cost and not too difficult. It also gives you a certificate once you pass the test!

Pets & Children

I'm not dictating any rules here although I do have a strong opinion!

I'm really just suggesting you take a few moments to consider the risks of pets and children in your kitchen.

There is a lot of hot food, sharp knives and equipment that is a huge distraction to the young, inquisitive mind.

We also need to think about the risk of contamination from children and pets that may not be the cleanest things in your kitchen.

Just saying!

Grease and Flour Loaf Tin

Introduction

There are many ways to prepare a loaf tin before baking, and you could argue convincingly for each method.

I use a simple and reliable method that does not impact the loaf I am making!

Alternative methods will use butter or oil lining, greaseproof (parchment) paper or rely on the non-stick claims of the tin manufacturer.

I use the butter and flour method.

You will need a knob of butter and a couple of dessert spoons of self-raising flour.

The objective is to bake a loaf and be able to remove it from the tin without any hassle!

Method



Getting the equipment ready



Soften the butter for a few seconds in the microwave oven.

Use a pastry brush to get the melted butter onto all surfaces and into the corners.

Don't skimp this part – be sure to cover all surfaces.



Add the flour to the tin and shoogle it around so that is covers all surfaces – right into the edges.

It takes a bit of practice to get the flour right out the edges without making too much mess.



Voila!

This will save you a whole lot of grief when you try to remove the cooked loaf from the tin!



Loaf comes out the tin clean and easy.

Heating Marion's Meals

Introduction

Marion's Meals are intended to be reheated in a microwave or conventional oven. It is assumed that there is no stove top for reheating and all meals must be ready to heat without any further cooking skills.

Serving Containers



Large Plastic Tub

These shall be heated in the microwave with lid-on (slightly loose).

Add a splash of water before heating



Small Foil Tray

These are heated in a conventional oven with the lid off.

Place foil tray on a baking tray for heating.



Large Foil Tray

These are heated in the conventional oven with lid on. These trays are not common in Marion's Meals.



Three-Cell Tray

These are heated in the microwave with lid loose and are good for getting the whole meal in a single container.

Example Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Fryer

Cold

5 mins 3-Cell

Foil Tray

Adjust times if cooking from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout.

3-Cell Tray

Loosen the lid and pop in the microwave on full power for the time indicated.

This is best consumed directly from the tray.

Foil Tray

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5. Remove the paper lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

To serve the foil version on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Notes

As of 2022, Marion's Meals have not yet been tested in an air fryer.

The adjustments for heating from frozen are usually made by doubling the time indicated for heating from chilled.

The most important thing is to ensure the food is piping hot throughout before serving.

Microwaved meals generally benefit from a little mixing with a fork part way through the heating process.

Lining a Baking Tray

Introduction

There are many ways to prepare a baking tray before baking, and you could argue convincingly for each method.

I use a simple and reliable method that does not impact the tray-bake I am making!

Alternative methods will use butter, flour or oil, or rely on the non-stick claims of the tin manufacturer.

I use the greaseproof (parchment) paper & butter method.

You will need a knob of butter and a sheet of greaseproof paper.

When you now fill the tray with your ingredients, the paper is more inclined to stay in place, giving a more even thickness of the tray-bake.

The objective is to be able to remove your traybake from the tray without any hassle!

It also makes it easier to transfer the bake to the cooling rack and to the chopping board for slicing.





Method



Soften the butter for a few seconds in the microwave oven.

Use a pastry brush to get the melted butter onto all surfaces and into the corners.



Line the baking tray with greaseproof paper, folding it right in to the corners and pressing it down all over.

As the butter sets, it helps the paper stay in place.



Using a lined baking tray.

Roasting Squashes

Introduction

Roasting squashes, particularly for soup, helps bring out the flavour of the squash and makes preparation much easier and faster (and safer!)

The alternative is to peel, clean, dice and boil the squash, and if you've ever done that with hard squash such as butternut squash, you will know how painful that that can be on the hands – not forgetting the orange fingers!

This technique works with most squashes such as butternut squash, spaghetti squash and even some varieties of courgette.

Butternut Squash Method

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°
- Cut the squash in half
- Scoop out the seeds and membrane
- Put the squash, face up, on the baking tray
- Brush olive oil over the exposed surface
- Lightly season with salt and pepper
- Place a sprig of rosemary in each bowl
- Pop in the oven for 1 hour

They are easy to scoop out with a spoon but take care not to catch any skin as it is paper thin and easy to tear.

If the flesh of the squash is not totally soft, that's not a problem as it will still be cooked with the rest of the ingredients in a soup.



Spaghetti Squash Method

This is very similar to the butternut squash method, but you may want to try different herbs such as Thyme.

The cooked skin is a bit thicker than butternut squash and is less prone to tearing when you scoop out the flesh.





The flesh has a totally different appearance – like strands of spaghetti – hence the name!

These are not common in the supermarkets but are very easy to grow in Scotland.

The seeds are easy to germinate and grow if washed, dried and stored until next year.

Courgette

Again, a very similar technique to the butternut squash, but with a shorter cooking time. This works best with ball-shaped courgette (Eclipse). It's worth noting that courgette tends to be much softer and easier to dice so you can simply wash and dice — with skin on — before roasting.



Notes

Some cooking books suggest we cook these with the cut-face down. I don't!

It makes sense to add a little bit seasoning to the cut side and not the skin.

I also like to use the "bowl" to hold a bit of oil and the herbs – particularly if they are like rosemary stalks or bay leaf that we want to remove after roasting.

Selecting a Potato Variety

Introduction

Potato seems to fill a very wide role in Scottish cooking so it's no surprise that it is also common in Marion's Meals. We use them as baked, boiled, mashed, wedged, diced, sliced, or roasted!

The end results all start with the same step – choosing the right potato!

Choosing A Potato

Yes, choosing a potato variety is a real thing and something you need to consider.

If you use a soft, floury, potato for boilers you will get a mushy mess that ends up in the compost bin! If you use a waxy potato for mash, you do not get the smooth, creamy texture we aim for.

The supermarkets try to make this easier for us by selling a "general, all-rounder" – somewhere between floury and waxy. The results from these are usually ok, and that's what many folk use. There's nothing wrong with them but, then again, nothing special.

There are dozens of potato varieties available, but not many are common in the local supermarket.

So, how do we choose?

Boiling or Salad Potato

You want to select a potato that is classed as waxy and that will hold its shape when boiled.

My favourite – and also one of the most popular – is Charlotte, with its yellowish, waxy texture.

Another benefit is that Charlotte is very easy to grow. If you are new to gardening or even just want to try a single potato sack on your balcony, you can't go much wrong if your only variety is Charlotte.

It is classed as a "Second Early" and can be cropped around 4 months of planting. I am able to plant them from mid April, meaning I start to pick them in mid to late August.

A simple wash in cold water and they can be cooked with skin on.

Mash, Roast, Baked and Wedges

You want to select a potato that is floury and will become fluffy when roasted or soft and creamy when mashed.

I have a few "go-to" potatoes in this category, namely Desiree, Maris Piper or King Edward. These are traditional potatoes in the UK that are very common in the supermarket.

If you are going to grow potatoes, then select a variety that is successful in your area. I've picked varieties that grow very well in Central Scotland. Note that other texts claim Desiree does not grow in Scotland. Mmm, they must mean a different Scotland as I've grown them successfully for years!

These potatoes are classed as a "Main Crop" and can be harvested around 4 to 5 months after planting. I am able to plant them from mid April onwards meaning I start to pick them in late August or September.

They store very well over winter.

I tend to peel these potatoes for mashing but leaving skin-on for wedges does give a nice touch.



Charlotte – a yellow, waxy potato



Desiree – a redskinned floury potato

Note: I have not discussed "First Early", "New" or "Baby Boilers" as they don't freeze and reheat well and, therefore, do not feature in Marion's Meals.

Serving Containers

If serving fresh, you can serve straight from the pan, from a casserole dish, from a pie dish or whatever you have available. If you plan to freeze the meals, the serving trays I use can be bought in bulk - online, at the cash and carry or held back from your takeway meals. The plastic trays can often be washed and reused.

Large Plastic Tray



These can be heated in the microwave with lid-on (slightly loosened).

You will need other container that has the potatoes and veg. Popular veg is a combined mash of potato, carrot and turnip.

Soups are also portioned into these large plastic trays.

Small Foil Tray



These are heated in a conventional oven with lid off.

Ideal for dishes that have mashed potato topping such as cottage pie, shepherd's pie and the like.

The whole meal; the meat, the veg and the potato are in the same tray. It might not look like a big portion, but the total weight can still be as much as 400g to 500g.

These trays are also good for roast potato, hash browns, potato wedges and cauliflower cheese.

Large Foil Tray



These are heated in the conventional oven with lid on, but are not used that often in Marion's Meals.

They will be used for Breakfast in a Box or for larger portions of things such as sausage and onion.

Also used as a mini, disposable, packaging and baking tray for bought food that is split into individual portions such as Hunters Chicken or Chicken Drumsticks.

Three-Cell Tray



These are heated in the microwave with lid loose and are good for getting the whole meal in a single container.

They can be used for roast beef or casseroles where you want to add extra potato and veg on the side.

Because these are microwaved, they don't work with roast potato but they do ok with boiled potato and are great with mash.

Slicing & Dicing Chicken Breast

Introduction

Chicken is a great ingredient in Marion's Meals as it can be prepared in many different ways, it is a good, low-cost, protein and is easy to eat and digest. However, it can also be problematic.

Raw chicken is regarded as one of the more dangerous foods in the kitchen. When handled incorrectly, it can be an easy source of food poisoning.

It might sound counter-intuitive, but do not wash raw chicken before slicing, dicing or cooking.

Complete all your other preparation before you start to work with raw chicken.

You want to avoid touching the chicken with your bare hands and to minimize the movement of uncovered chicken within the kitchen.

Never get raw chicken near other cooked food or ingredients that are not to be cooked (such as salads or garni)

I do not discuss the full risks and implications here, but this is a significant topic in any food handling training courses I have completed.

Check out the Food Safety Techniques section in Marion's Meals.

Dicing Chicken

Work as close as you can to the cooker and the pot in which you are putting the chicken.

Open the tray of chicken and stab a fork securely into the fat end of the chicken breast.

Use the fork to lift the chicken breast out of the tray and quickly move to hold it over your pot.

Cut the chicken into rough chunks with kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Slicing Chicken

Be sure you have plenty clear space to work and that you have sanitised the work area you are about to use. Ensure that there are no other ingredients, cooked foods, cloths or towels near your workspace.

Open the tray of chicken and stab a fork securely into the fat end of the chicken breast.

Use the fork to lift the chicken breast out of the tray and place it on the chopping board.

Use the fork to hold the chicken breast as you slice it into strips with a very sharp knife.

Transfer the sliced chicken from the chopping board directly into the saucepan.

Wash the worksurface with anti-bacterial soap or spray – even if you do not think any chicken touched the surfaces. A small splash of chicken juices could be enough to cause a problem.



Slice into thin strips using a very sharp knife.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.

Put utensils, scissors and chopping boards right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.

Dispose of the wrapping and scraps.

Wash your hands.

Slicing & Dicing Onion

Introduction

There are a few different styles of prepared onion that we want to consider

- 1. Diced
- 2. Chunky
- 3. Fine Diced
- 4. Thin shredded

Regardless of the desired outcome, we start all techniques the same.

Note: We try to position the onion with a flat side down so we reduce the chance of the onion rocking and the knife slipping as we cut.



Cut the top off the onion.



Lay if flat-side down and cut in half – through the root.



Remove the skin and place face-down.

The root is still in place.



Cut from near the root to the front.
Do not cut through the root.

The spacing of the cuts is determined by the final size you require.

You may want:

- no cuts if you want thin slices for onion soup,
- one cut if you want chunky, or
- three or four cuts if you want diced.



Start to slice the onion until you get about half-way.

It gets a bit tricker after that, and you are in danger of cutting your fingers!



Flip the onion 90° so the surface you were cutting is now face down and cut a bit off to flatten the original top. Flip back to your start position.



Now you can finish slicing or dicing the rest of the onion until you only have the root left – which you discard.

Slicing & Dicing Potato

Introduction

Potato seems to fill a very wide role in Scottish cooking so it's no surprise that it is also common in Marion's Meals. We use them as baked, boiled, mashed, wedged, diced, sliced or roasted!

The end results all start with the same steps:

- choose the right variety of potato
- wash then peel the potato
- rinse the peeled potato

Check out the other Techniques & Recipes with potato.

Note: It does not matter if we are slicing, dicing or wedging, it is much safer if we have a flat cut so we can lie the potato face-down for future cuts. The first cut will not have a flat bottom – but most cuts after that will, and that reduces the chance of the potato rocking or the knife slipping.

Cutting Potato for Boiling or Roasting

This is just a variant of the dicing technique, but with much bigger pieces! Your aim is to get potatoes of similar size for consistent cooking.

It may be as simple as cutting a potato in half or doing a couple of extra cuts for large potatoes.

In the photo below, I laid the middle piece on one of the flat ends and cut it in half again.



Dicing Potato for Soups & Stovies

You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces that will cook at different rates.

This will give you small pieces that break down into the liquid but will still leave you with some decent sized chunks in the dish.



Cut the potato along its length.



We have a flat bottom for all other cuts.



Cut the halves in half.
Some potatoes you
may want extra cuts
along the length to
create a smaller dice.
Rotate and cut across
them in a variety of
thickness to get diced
potato.



You end up with a mixture of large and small diced potato – perfect for your soups and stovies!

The big chunks will break down a little, and as a minimum, they will lose their sharp edges and become a bit more "rounded".

Slicing Potato

Slicing potato for mashing allows them to cook much quicker.

The thickness of the slices does not really matter as they will be getting mashed anyway.

Just don't have wafer-thin, or brick-thick slices!



Cut the potato along its length.



Turn them over for slicing. We want a flat bottom for all other cuts.



Tuck your finger tips under so the edge of the knife can't get near them.



Now it's easy to slice the potato without it rolling about the board and without getting your fingers cut!

If you are using very large potatoes, you should lay the slices on your chopping board and cut them in half

Potato Wedges

The wedge shape gives us a thin end that goes crispy, but transitions to a thick end that remains fluffy in the middle.



Cut the potato along its length.



We want a flat bottom for all other cuts.



Cut the halves in half.
Turn the wedges to have
the largest surface to the
bottom



Now the trickier cut. It's a curved cut from end point to end point.



Continue to cut all the quarters into wedges.



8 wedges from a decent sized potato. You will get more or fewer depending on the potato size.

Store Cupboard

I tend to keep a few items in the store cupboard or freezer, that I know I use regularly. This tends to be items that have a long shelf-life.

This lets me cook a lot of the dishes right from the larder, or with just a simple addition of base meat or vegetables.

You don't need to rush out and buy all these items – you can build your store cupboard as you cook new recipes.

Stock Cubes (Knorr)

- Ham
- Chicken
- Vegetable
- Beef

Dried Herbs

- Mixed Herbs
- Oregano
- Chilli Flakes (for me!)
- Garlic Flakes
- Thyme
- Bay leaf
- Mint
- Chinese 5 Spice

Tins & Cartons

- Mushy Peas
- Chopped Tomato
- Passata
- Mixed Beans

Sauce Mix (dry powder)

- Cottage Pie
- Shepherd's Pie
- Chicken Casserole
- Sausage Casserole
- Chicken & Leek Bake
- Creamy Pepper Sauce
- Parsley Sauce
- Cheese Sauce
- Beef Casserole
- Pork Casserole

Note: I do have recipes for making all these sauces from scratch, but the packets are so much easier. I use either Schwartz or Colemans. Both work well.

In the Freezer

- Diced Onion
- Diced Turnip
- Diced Carrot
- Peas
- Sweetcorn

Processed frozen carrot is rarely any good – it's a bit to rubbery for my liking.

Fortunately, it's easy to work with fresh carrot to slice or dice for use right away, and to portion up the excess for freezing.

I also freeze a lot of home produce from the garden or anything that is left over from my purchases for a cooking day.

These include:

- Carrot
- Green Courgette
- Yellow Courgette
- Spaghetti Squash
- Green Beans
- Onion
- Diced Sweet Peppers

It might be worth investing in a bag tape machine for freezing small portions. This is a great time saver! See the "Techniques" for more details.

Others

- Rice Pockets (Ben's)
 - Egg Fried
 - Tomato & Basil
 - Golden Vegetable
- Risotto Rice
- Meat flavoured gravy powder (Bisto)
- White Thickening Granules (McDougalls)
- Cornflour
- Sea salt and grinder
- Black peppercorns and grinder
- Vanilla Extract
- Orange Essence

Topping With Mashed Potato

Introduction

Many main meals are topped with mashed potato, to be frozen and then reheated in a conventional oven. This would include Cottage Pie, Fish Pie, Shepherd's Pie or even many of the casseroles so you can present a whole meal in a single dish.

The conventional oven gives us a browned and slightly crunchy potato top to the dish.

How Much Potato Do We Need?

First thing to know is your portion size. Your numbers may vary from mine, but you will not be different by much!

I present the dishes in small foil trays (No. 2 – 144mm) and aim for about 150g of mashed potato per portion.

I use an ice-cream scoop that holds about 70g of potato so I am aiming for 2 scoops of mash per portion.

We now need to consider that the weight of the potato before peeling is much more than the weight once it is peeled. The problem is knowing how much different that is!

You can gradually add your peeled potatoes on top of your scales to see how much you have. Or you can calculate (estimate) how much you need.

Estimate the Potato Needed

I use a traditional potato peeler as it takes least waste. I get about a 15% loss, unless the potatoes are very old or have many bad spots.

I will work on the basis that you get 25% waste. That may leave you with a bit extra but you can eat that on the fly, or use to make tattie scones!

Portions	Mashed	Unpeeled
1	150g	200g
4	600g	800g
5	750g	1kg
6	900g	1.20kg
10	1.5kg	2kg

How much potato to buy for the portions needed

Preparing the Potato

Follow the process for making mashed potato. You will find that in the section titled as Sides, Sauces and Accompaniments.

Allow the potato to cool slightly, but not very cold as this makes it much harder to work.

Topping With Mashed Potato

Make sure the meat is lightly pressed into the tray bottom and corners with a fork. You want it mostly flat – certainly with no large humps!

Make sure the meat is cool before adding potato.

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it.

Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.

Once the potato has been spread, run the fork lightly over the top to create little ridges.

You are now ready to fit the lid, label and chill before freezing.

Of course, you don't need to freeze – you can reheat as fresh but you should keep the meals chilled in the fridge and consume within 24 hours.





This will be reheated in a conventional oven with the lid off to give a browned and crunchy top.

If you are making this for yourself or for someone with the ability to finish the preparation, you may want to sprinkle some natural breadcrumbs or grated cheese over the potato before placing it in the oven.

Washing Lentils

Introduction

When you buy red split lentils for making soup, they can be filthy with bits of grass, seeds, bugs and muck.

When you cover the lentils with water for cooking, the water should be clear – not murky!

Before you use lentils, wash them, then wash them again.

Then wash them again!

I'm going to suggest two different methods that depend on the quantity of lentils you are washing.

Method 1

Bests suited to small quantities of lentils (no more than 500g). They should be able to fit easily in a sieve so that it is no more than half full.

500g is also a common bag size from the supermarket and is good for making 10 portions of lentil soup in a single batch.

Pour the lentils into a sieve or colander and plunge into a large pot of water.

We are looking to keep the lentils in the sieve for the whole washing process.

Sloosh the lentils about until the water is getting dirty.

You might need to get your fingers in there to move them around and to help with the wash.

Remove the sieve of lentils and set aside on a bowl or plate. Do not empty the lentils out of the sieve.

Empty the pot of dirty water.

Replace the water with fresh, clean, water and repeat the wash – maybe as much as 3 or 4 times.

You will quickly see a massive difference in the colour of the water and, depending on the brand of lentils, you will have a visual guide to how many times you need to change the water.

Note: Some large bits of muck may get caught in the sieve and not be drained with the dirty water.

Method 2

Best suited for larger quantities of lentils – over 500g.

Tip the lentils into a large pot and fill with water.

Sloosh around for a minute with your hand or a spatula. Now drain the water from the pot. You should have a sieve to hand to catch any stray lentils as you empty the water.

This can be quite tricky as the pot gets very heavy and you probably need three hands!

You may not be able to get all the water out of the pot each cycle and this is a problem! As you drain the water, the dirt tends to concentrate in the bottom of the pan so it will take many more cycles to get the water clean.

Return all lentils to the pot and repeat 4 or 5 times.

This method can be a clert as you empty and refill the pot and the lentils stick to the sieve.

Although this is probably a better method for large quantities of lentils, if it's only a couple of Kg that I am washing, I'd use Method 1 in batches.





Lentils before and after washing

Note

Some suggest you could try holding the lentils in a sieve under running water for a few minutes, but I am not so keen on this method as you have no good indicator that the lentils are clean.

It is also a bit difficult to mix the water around the lentils to ensure they have all been cleaned. They really are very dirty and need a good clean!

Weight Conversion

Introduction

Metric, Imperial, Cups or a sploosh? How much does that actually mean and how can we convert units between recipes?

The good news is that Marion's Meals are almost all stated in the same units—metric. Ok, some of the older recipes still need to be converted from cups or ounces to grams, but that is a work in progress and may come in the next edition!

On a positive note, recipes tend to depend on the ratio of ingredients rather than the actual quantities - and that's fine if you are batch cooking or can vary the quantity in a "portion" before you freeze it.

Some recipes are measured in Cups. For me, this is fine to work with once you get a feel for what a "cup" actually means. Also, I don't need to get the kitchen scales out!

Other recipes have so much leeway in the quantities you can judge it through experience without weighing anything.

For example, adding water or stock to meat dishes or soups is almost always done on gut feel, or is based on terms such as "enough water to cover" or "a splash of water but do not let it boil dry".

If a soup asks for 100g of diced carrot and you have 80g, or 120g, it really does not matter. Go with what you have and minimise waste.

On the other hand, some recipes are much more sensitive to the quantities. It doesn't take much deviation from the recipe to destroy your batch of scones!

Conversion

Grams to Ounces

If you want to work in ounces, but the recipe is given in grams, here is a near approximation for the conversion.

Grams	Ounce
50g	1.75oz
100g	3.5oz
125g	4.5oz
150g	5.5oz
200g	7oz
500g	17.5oz
750g	26.5oz
1kg	35oz

Ounces to Grams

If you want to work in grams, but the recipe is given in ounces, here is a near approximation for the conversion.

Ounces	Grams
0.5oz	14g
1oz	28g
2oz	57g
3oz	85g
4oz	113g
5oz	142g
6oz	170g
10oz	284g
14oz	400g

Cups to Grams

This is a bit tricky. It's like converting cubes to grams. One is a measure of volume, and the other is a measure of weight.

It depends not only on the size of the cup, but on the ingredient that is in the cup, and the state of the ingredient.

Flour has a different weight if it is sieved or not.

A cup of diced butter depends on the size of the cubes and the size of the air gaps between cubes.



Sides, Sauces and Accompaniments

Hash Brown	33
Mashed Potato	35
Onion Gravy	37
Potato Wedges	39
Puff Pastry	41
Roast Potato	43
Tattie Scone	45

Hash Brown

Introduction

This is a dubious contender to be included as a recipe. The fact is, these home-made hash browns can be a bit greasy and you might be as well off to buy the frozen ones from a supermarket.

I do still make these from time to time as I think they are a better flavour, don't include all the chemicals and you can tinker with the recipe!

Here goes anyway.

Ingredients

- 100g Potato
- 50g Onion
- 1 Small Egg (or half a medium egg!)
- Big knob of butter
- Salt & Pepper

Options

- You can add chopped garlic but don't add too much that it becomes over-powering. 1 clove of fresh or a ½ teaspoon of dried garlic is about enough.
- You can add some grated cheese but watch out for allergies.

Equipment

- Potato Peeler
- Large, sharp, knife
- Bowl
- Spatula

Preparation

There's not much to prepare other than peel the tatties!



Method

Peel & wash the potato

Rough grate the potato into a bowl.

Slice the onions.

Combine the potato and onion.

Now the tricky bit. We need to remove excess water from the potato and onion.

Some books will tell you to wrap them in a clean tea towel and twist and squeeze out the water. I'm not so sure about that – but I have used that technique. I'm concerned about the abuse we give our tea towels and the growing trend to wash them at low temperatures. Your call on that one!

An alternative is to place the bowl in the microwave for 30 seconds - but I know that this is not as effective!

Beat the egg in a bowl.

Add half the egg, the salt and the pepper. Cooking potato like this really, really, needs a bit of seasoning!

Mix well.

If the mix is still a bit dry and the potato/onion mix is not fully coated, add more egg. We don't want the mix to get sloppy!

It's here that you can add the options such as garlic, chilli flakes or grated cheese. Mix well.

Use a medium sized frying pan, as the larger the pan, the more butter you need!

Put a decent knob of butter and a small splash of oil in the pan and bring to a moderate heat (hot but not smoking as we want to cook the potato before it burns).

Cook for about 4 or 5 minutes then turn and do the same on the other side.

Take out the pan and drain on a piece of kitchen paper towel.

Portions

Number of portions 4 Hash Browns

Storage

These really need to be eaten fresh. If you want to freeze them, you're probably as well buying them already frozen from the supermarket.

If you are freezing them, allow to cool first.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from frozen are a guide only.

Not suitable for defrosting first – they go soggy!

Micro

Oven

Stove

Air Fryer

Cold











20 mins

Tested

You can also reheat in a frying pan.

Technique

Grating Potato

This method is using a rotating grater. I'm sure you know how to use a traditional grater so won't waste space telling you!



Cut the potato along its length.



Turn them over for cutting again until we get a size that fits the grater!



Rough Grater



Too sloppy – I didn't dry the potato properly



One as a wee taster!



Two decent Hash Browns for dinner. They are better as a breakfast side!

Mashed Potato

Introduction

This is not rocket science but it might help if you are making mashed potato to top something such as Cottage Pie, or just wanting mashed potato to have in the freezer.

Ingredients

- 1kg bag of white potato (gives about 800g of mashed potato)
- Splash of semi-skimmed milk
- Big knob of butter
- Salt & Pepper

Options

- You can use full-fat milk for a creamier but less healthy - option
- You can add chopped garlic but don't add too much that it becomes over-powering
- You can add some grated cheese but watch out for allergies.

Equipment

- Tattie Peeler
- Large, sharp, knife
- Spatula
- Large Pot
- Kettle
- Sieve or Colander

Preparation

There's not much to prepare other than peel the tatties!

• Boil a kettle of water

Method

Boil a kettle of water

Peel & wash the potato

Cut them into slices. (See Techniques below)

Add to the pot and rinse a couple of times.

Empty the cold water out the pot then put it on a high heat.

Immediately add the boiling water and return to the boil. Note the cold potatoes will cool the water. Add some salt to your own taste.

Once the pot has returned to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

Test them with a fork – they should be soft. You may need to return them to the heat for a further 5-10 minutes depending on the thickness of the slices.

Remove the potatoes from the heat and drain off the water using a sieve or colander.

Return the potatoes to the pot and place over a medium heat.

Use the spatula to keep moving the potato. The objective here is to boil of any residual water and dry the potatoes. This will start to break up the potato – which is fine.

Keep it moving and don't allow the potato to stick to the pot or to burn. This should take just 1 or 2 minutes.

The potato will still be hot – allowing the butter to melt

Add the butter, milk and seasoning then mash the potato to a smooth consistency.

Portions

Number of portions

12 balls of about 70g each.

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray or for a mashed topping in foil trays for individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Note that my ice-cream scoop creates balls of mashed potato that are about 70g.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from frozen are a guide only.

See the individual recipes where potato has been used as a topping for a main meal.

Instructions here are for potato mash that has been frozen and thawed in a plastic tub.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Frver

Cold









3 min Stir 2 min

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Technique

Slicing Potato

Slicing potato for mashing allows them to cook much quicker.

The thickness of the slices does not really matter as they will be getting mashed anyway.

Just don't have wafer-thin, or brick-thick slices!

Note: It is much safer if we have a flat cut to lie the potato face-down for future cuts. The first cut will not have a flat bottom – but all cuts after that will, and that reduces the chance of the potato rocking or the knife slipping.



Cut the potato along its length.



Turn them over for slicing. We want a flat bottom for all other cuts.



Tuck your fingertips under so the edge of the knife can't get near them.



Now it's easy to slice the potato without it rolling about the board and without getting your fingers cut!

Onion Gravy

Introduction

This is a very simple recipe that you can knock up in small batches to use fresh, add to meals for freezing or you can make smaller portions to keep in the freezer.

Ingredients

- Medium to Large Onion
- ½ tsp Mixed Herbs
- 2 tsp Bisto
- 300ml Water
- Sunflower Oil or knob of butter

Options

- You can make a whole range of flavours or introduce your own seasoning to suit
- You can use stock cubes or a powdered beef casserole sauce if you want stronger flavours and larger quantities.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Large Pot
- Kettle
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to prepare other than prep the onion!

 Put the water into an empty kettle and get it on to boil.

Method

Boil a kettle of water

Peel and fine slice the onion. (See Techniques)

Add to the pot with the sunflower oil or butter.

Gently heat the onions to soften them but not to get them very dark.

This should take about 5 minutes.

Add the boiled water to the pot and pop in the mixed herbs.

Mix the Bisto in a cup with a splash of water until there are no lumps.

Add the Bisto to the pot and return to the boil.

Simmer for a further 5 minutes.

This should not need any further seasoning but you might like to add a little bit of black pepper.



Number of portions 3 - 4.

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small pots for adding at the time of heating individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from defrosted are a guide only.

Be sure the gravy is piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro O

Oven

Stove





3 min

5 min
Adjust times if heating frozen.

Note: It is much safer if we have a flat cut to lie the onion face-down for future cuts. The first cut will not have a flat bottom – but all cuts after that will, and that reduces the chance of the onion rocking or the knife slipping.

Technique Fine Slicing Onion



Cut the top off the onion



Lay face down and cut in half through the root



Remove the skin



For "quarter" slices, cut down the middle – but not all the way to the root. This holds the onion together for making your fine slices.



Start making the fine slices until you get about half of the onion sliced. It's getting tricky now as you cut on the "down slope" near the root!



Lay the onion face down on your cut surface and take a little bit off what was the top. This gives a flat surface on the top for the final cuts.

Potato Wedges

Introduction

This is a very simple recipe that you can knock up in small batches to eat fresh, or you can make a few portions and keep in the freezer.

Ingredients

- Medium to Large Potatoes
- Flavouring
- Sunflower Oil

Options

- You can make a whole range of flavours or introduce your own seasoning to suit. I tend to favour "dry" seasoning, particularly if I am freezing the wedges
 - Lightly Seasoned (plain)
 - o Salt & Black Pepper
 - o Garlic & Chilli
 - o Steak Rub

Equipment

- Tattie Peeler
- Large Pot
- Kettle
- Sieve or Colander
- Baking Tray
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to prepare other than peel the tatties!

- Boil a kettle of water
- Pre-heat the oven to 220°.

Method

Boil a kettle of water

Peel & wash the potato

Cut them into wedges. (See Techniques)

Add to the pot and rinse a couple of times.

Empty the water and put the pot on a high heat.

Immediately add the boiling water and return to the boil. Note the cold potatoes will cool the water.

Once the pot has returned to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for a couple of minutes.

Remove the potatoes from the heat and drain off the water using a sieve or colander.

Return the potatoes to the pot and add the oil and flavouring.

Jiggle the pot lightly to distribute the oil and seasoning over the potatoes.

Transfer the wedges to the baking tray an put in the pre-heated oven at 220°.

If you are going to freeze the wedges, leave them in for 20 minutes.

If you want to eat them fresh, leave them in the oven for a further 10 minutes.



Number of portions

8 – 12 wedges per portion.

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a foil tray for individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from frozen are a guide only.

Be sure the wedges are piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro

S

Stove

Fryer







Oven









30 mi

Best cooked from frozen.

Reheat in the oven from frozen, with lid-off.

Pre-heat the oven to 200° and place foil tray of wedges on a baking tray and put in the oven for about 30 minutes depending on your oven efficiency and the number of trays being heated.



Not suitable for microwave heating due to the foil tray and the need for crispy wedges.

Note: It is much safer if we have a flat cut to lie the potato face-down for future cuts. The first cut will not have a flat bottom – but all cuts after that will, and that reduces the chance of the potato rocking or the knife slipping.

Technique Cutting Potato Wedges



Cut the potato along its length.



We want a flat bottom for all other cuts.



Cut the halves in half.
Turn the wedges to have
the largest surface to the
bottom



Now the trickier cut. It's a curved cut from end point to end point.



Continue to cut the quarters in half again.



8 wedges from a decent sized potato. You will get more or fewer depending on the potato size.

Puff Pastry

Introduction

This is a very simple recipe that you can knock up in small batches.

I use the "cups" measure to make it even simpler!

The real trick with any puff pastry is the rolling and folding (laminating).

It's also important that the pastry is cold when it goes into a pre-heated oven. This will cause the butter to melt and the steam, trapped in the dough through laminating, is what creates the flaky layers.

Ingredients

- 1 Cup Plain Flour
- ½ Teaspoon of Salt
- ½ Cup of Unsalted Butter
- ¼ Cup of COLD water

Options

- I'm sure you can make this with salted butter, but I think it's a bit salty for me.
- If you are really concerned about your salt intake, you can consider just adding a ¼ teaspoon of salt to the unsalted butter.

Equipment

- 3 Cups
- Mixing Bowl
- Rolling Pin
- Large chopping board for rolling pastry
- Cling Film

Preparation

There's nothing to prepare!

Method

Cut the butter into small pieces

Mix the salt into the flour in a mixing bowl.

Add the butter and toss it around until it is coated with flour

Add the water a little at a time and mix to make a thick dough. Note that you may not need all the water – or you may need a bit extra!

Once you can form the dough in a single, stiff, ball, roughly flatten it by hand to create a disk as this will cool quicker.

Wrap it in cling film and refrigerate for an hour or so.

Add a sprinkling of flour to the chopping board and to the rolling pin.

Remove the dough from the fridge and remove the cling film.

Roll the pastry to about ½ cm thick.

Fold over one edge to about two-thirds across then fold the other edge over the first one. You will now have a rectangle of dough, with three layers.

Rotate 90° and repeat.

You want to do this, maybe 5 or 6 times.

Once complete, wrap in cling film and put it back in the fridge.

Leave the dough in the fridge until you need it. You want to minimise the time out of the fridge before it goes in the oven.

Get the oven on and make sure it is properly preheated. Roll the dough to your required size, add to your pie and get it in the oven!

Number of portions

Storage

Suitable for freezing.

I tend not to freeze it just as blocks of pastry but will freeze it on top of things such as a Steak Pie.

Check out the individual recipes to see if they are suitable for freezing.

But, of course, you can freeze it if you want to save time later.

Examples for Use

Ham & Egg Pie



Ham & Egg Pie with home made pastry – before cooking



Ham & Egg Pie with home made pastry – after cooking

- Lightly fry the ham or pancetta
- Beat the eggs
- Line the foil tray with puff pastry
- Add the pancetta to the dish
- Add the egg to the dish.
- Not suitable for freezing.

Steak Pie for Freezing



Steak Pie with home made pastry and sides.



Different version - On the plate.

Note that the pastry may not rise as well as the "shop bought". It's all about laminating!

- Fully cook the meat
- Add the meat to a foil tray
- Add the puff pastry
- Do not cook the pastry
- Seal in a freezer bag
- Defrost in the fridge and remove from bag before cooking

Roast Potato

Introduction

This is a very simple recipe that you can knock up in small batches to eat fresh, or you can make a few portions and keep in the freezer.

It's much simpler than the traditional recipes for hassleback potatoes or for those that insist on goose fat or other such unhealthy options!

Also, on the plus side – these freeze very well.

Ingredients

- 1kg bag of potatoes gives 800g peeled.
- Seasoning
- Sunflower Oil

Options

- You can coat the cooked potato with a little bit of flour as you shoogle them in the pan.
- You can also add a coating or flavouring to the potato after par-boiling.

Equipment

- Tattie Peeler
- Large Pot
- Sieve or Colander
- Baking Tray
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to prepare other than peel the tatties!

- Boil a kettle of water
- Pre-heat the oven to 200°.

Method

Boil a kettle of water

Peel & wash the potato

Cut them into golf-ball size. (See Techniques)

Add to the pot and rinse a couple of times.

Empty the water and put the pot on a high heat.

Immediately add the boiling water and return to the boil. Note the cold potatoes will cool the water. Add a bit salt to the water.

Once the pot has returned to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

Remove the potatoes from the heat and drain off the water using a sieve or colander.

Return the potatoes to the pot and add the oil and any other seasoning you fancy.

Jiggle the pot lightly to distribute the oil and seasoning over the potatoes. This will also loosen the edges on the potato for a crispy finish.

Transfer the potatoes in a single layer to the baking tray(s) and put in the oven at 200°.

If you are going to freeze the roasties, leave them in for 20 minutes.

If you want to eat them fresh, turn over the potatoes and return them to the oven for a further 10 minutes.



Number of portions

5 – 8 potatoes per portion.

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a foil tray for individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from frozen are a guide only.

Be sure the potatoes are piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro

Oven







Fryer



Cold

Best cooked from frozen.

Reheat in the oven from frozen, with lid-off.

Pre-heat the oven to 200° and place foil tray of wedges on a baking tray and put in the oven for about 30 minutes depending on your oven efficiency and the number of trays being heated.



Not suitable for microwave heating due to the foil tray and the need for crispy potatoes.

Technique

Cutting Potatoes for Roasting or Boiling

Note: It is much safer if we have a flat cut to lie the potato face-down for future cuts. The first cut will not have a flat bottom - but all cuts after that will, and that reduces the chance of the potato rocking or the knife slipping.



Cut the potato in half. We want a flat bottom for all other cuts.



You might need to cut into thirds if it's a large potato.



Turn the potato "flat side down" and cut once again to get the final size you want.

Tattie Scone

Introduction

This is a very simple recipe that you can knock up in small batches.

There's a lot of flexibility in the recipe and by adding more flour or using a larger egg you can get tattie scones ranging from moist and thin to

thick and fluffy (ok, maybe a bit dry but nothing that a dollop of HP sauce won't fix!)

Ideal recipe for cooking "next day" if you have cooked too much potato for dinner.

Good for breakfast or as an alternative to wedges or chips if you're doing a quick tea.

Ingredients

- 200g cold mashed potato
- 25g self-raising flour
- 1 medium egg
- A splash of oil for frying

Quantities are just a guide as the exact numbers don't matter that much.

Options

 You can add extra bits such as cheese, softened onion or fried pancetta, but I like them how mamma used to make them – plain!

Equipment

- Mixing Bowl
- Frying pan
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's nothing to prepare!

Method

Put the mashed potato in a bowl.

You can make your own mashed potato and let it cool, or you can use the frozen mash from the supermarket. If you are using frozen, you need to defrost first. Note that If you are using the microwave to defrost the potato, make sure you don't overdo the heat as you don't want the potato hot.

Chuck in the flour – there's no need to sieve it, as long as there are no huge lumps.

Use a fork to break up the potato and combine it with the flour.

Crack the egg into a cup or small bowl and whisk with a fork.

Gently pour the egg into the potato mix – don't use it all at first just in case it's too much egg. You may end up with too much egg and the scones go sloppy.

It might take a bit of effort to get the egg to mix into the potato but it needs to be done!

If it's a bit stodgy, add the rest of the egg.

Pre-heat the oil in the frying pan to a medium heat — enough to let the oil flow smoothly.

Remember, too hot and the food burns before it is cooked.

Too cold and the food sooks up the oil and becomes an oily mess!

2 dessert spoons of mix per scone is about right. Space them apart as they will flatten and spread as they are cooked.

Turn over as required and cook both sides until golden brown.

.

Number of portions 4

Storage

Not suitable for freezing – they become rubbery when defrosted and reheated.



Three simple ingredients
– potato is already
seasoned



Mix ingredients to a thick baked rice consistency



Fry on a medium heat with a little oil



Adjusting the flour & egg can get you thick and fluffy, or thin and moist

Although the thin and moist is my favourite, you are advised not to serve these without fully cooking the egg.

Credit: Catherine Abbott, Cowdenbeath.



Soups

Beef & Onion Soup	49
Butternut Squash Soup	51
Cabbage Soup	53
Carrot and Courgette Soup	55
Carrot and Sweet Pepper Soup	57
Chicken & Sweetcorn Soup	59
Chicken, Leek & Potato Soup	61
Courgette & Potato Soup	63
Cullen Skink	65
French Cabbage Soup	67
French Onion Soup	69
Garden Vegetable Soup	71
Leek & Potato Soup	73
Leek, Potato & Rice Soup	75
Lentil Soup	77
Minestrone	79
Parsnip Soup	81
Pea & Ham Soup	83
Red Cabbage Soup	85
Tomato & Lentil Soup	87
Tomato & Rice Soup	89
Tomato Soup	91
Vegetable Soup	93

Beef & Onion Soup

Introduction

This is one of these soups that is made from leftovers and very much depends on what you have to hand. It's included here as an example of the ad-hoc soups that are easy to make.

This was first made using the excess gravy in Beef Olives. It has the flavour of the beef olives, the sauce and also has some carrot and other veg that was also left over in the gravy.

Ingredients

- 500ml Beef Stock
- 100g Chunky Onion
- 1 Knorr Beef Stock Cube
- Splash of Red Wine (Optional)
- ½ tsp dried Thyme (Optional)

Options

You can play around with this recipe depending on what stock you have, or what vegetables are in the cupboard.

I've based this on the leftover stock from Beef Olives but it would also work well with the stock from any red meat dish such as cottage pie, shepherd's pie or beef stew.

Fine dice a carrot and add this to the pot.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen chunky onion
- Alternatively, cut the onion into thin strips

It's not so easy to buy frozen chunky onion but I regularly make my own when I buy fresh onions. That means I have plenty in the freezer in individual portion bags that I can just grab and throw in the soup pot.

Method

Leave the gravy (beef stock) in the original pot to get the best of the flavours.

If there is only a small amount of gravy to work with, add some water but probably no more than 500ml in total so the flavours are not too diluted.

Add the onion and stock cube. You might just want to add half the stock cube as they can be a bit salty. You might even be able to skip the stock cube if you have enough stock with a decent flavour to start with.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes or until the onions are soft.

Keep an eye on this and stir from time to time.

Taste and season, but I doubt if more seasoning will be required.

Add a splash of red wine and simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Notes

225g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.

This will only give you two portions but it's cheap and easy to prepare if you are cooking anyway.

I had a half portion extra when I last made this so that was scoffed as I worked!

Number of portions 2 Final Portion Size 225g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

4 min 10 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I like to serve with part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

• Dicing and Slicing Onions

Butternut Squash Soup

Ingredients

- 700g Butternut Squash (1 typical size)
- 100g Diced Onion
- 250g Carrot
- 100g Diced Potato (1 medium)
- 2 small sprigs of fresh rosemary from the garden, or 1 teaspoon of dried rosemary
- 1 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cube
- Splash of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 litre of cold water
- Salt & Pepper

Options

- Add a few chilli flakes
- Add a clove of diced garlic for extra flavour

Equipment

- Sharp Knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Baking Tray
- Spatula

Preparation

- · Get all your ingredients to hand
- Prepare and Roast the Butternut Squash (See Techniques for details)
- Peel and dice the carrot
- Peel and dice the potato
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

You can be a bit rustic with the chopping and dicing as this is going to be blitzed anyway.

Be sure to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Roast the Butternut Squash.

Once the squash is roasted, remove the rosemary sprigs and scoop out the squash to add to the saucepan.

Pop the vegetables in the saucepan and barely cover them with water.

Add the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft – around 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time.

One litre of water might not be enough, but it is easier to add more than it is to boil off the excess!

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Notes

Vegetable stock cubes are not as salty as the ham or beef cubes so you might want to add a touch of salt.



Number of portions 6 - 7 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot

Roasting Butternut Squash

Full details are available in the Techniques section.

It is much easier to roast the squash rather than try to peel and dice. It also gives a much nicer flavour to the soup.

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°
- Cut the squash in half
- Scoop out the seeds and membrane
- Put the squash, face up, on the baking tray
- Brush the olive oil over the exposed surface
- Place a sprig of rosemary in the bowl of each half
- Pop in the oven for 1 hour

They are easy to scoop out with a spoon but take care not to catch any skin as it is paper thin and easy to tear.

If the flesh of the squash is not totally soft, that's not a problem as it will still be getting 30 minutes of simmer with the rest of the ingredients.





Cabbage Soup

Ingredients

- 250g Cabbage (½ small cabbage)
- 150g Potato (2 medium)
- 150g Carrot
- 100g Onion (1 medium)
- 2 litre cold water
- 1 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cube
- ½ Teaspoon Dried Mint

Options

- As with all soups, you can modify the ingredients and quantities but still stay with the general principle of the main ingredient – in this case - Cabbage.
- You can try other herbs such as Bay Leaf or Thyme if you want something different from mint.
- Of course, fresh mint from the garden or windowsill is much better than dried mint!

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Kitchen Scales
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Teaspoon

Preparation

- · Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Shred the cabbage
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

Method

Pour the water into a large saucepan and add the potato, carrot, onion and stock.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the cabbage and mint.

Bring back to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Assuming the potato and carrot are soft, you are ready to serve.

Notes

You might need to add a bit salt as there is not much in a vegetable stock cube.

You probably don't need to measure out the cabbage or the water exactly as there's a lot of flexibility in these numbers - and you still have a perfectly acceptable soup.



Shredding Cabbage for Soup

Number of portions 5 - 6 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Shredding Cabbage
- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potato
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot





Carrot and Courgette Soup

Ingredients

- 350g Diced Carrot
- 300g Courgette
- 100g Diced Onion
- 100g Diced Potato (1 medium)
- 1 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cube
- ½ Teaspoon Mixed Herbs
- 1litre of cold water

Options

- Add a few chilli flakes
- Add a clove of diced garlic for extra flavour

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel and dice the carrot
- Wash and dice the Courgette do not peel!
- Peel and dice the Potato
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

You can be a bit rustic with the chopping and dicing as this is going to be blitzed anyway.

Be sure to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Pop the vegetables in the large saucepan and barely cover them with water.

Add the stock cube and the mixed herbs.

Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft – around 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time.

One litre of water might not be enough, but it is easier to add more than it is to boil off the excess!

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Notes

Vegetable stock cubes are not as salty as the ham or beef cubes so you might want to add a little salt.

200g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.



Green Courgette in a range of sizes, directly from the garden.

Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	0000		4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

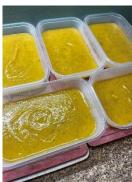
Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot
- Dicing and Slicing Courgette





Carrot and Sweet Pepper Soup

Ingredients

- 500g Diced Carrot
- 500g Sweet (Bell) Peppers 4 medium
- 100g Diced Onion
- 1 Clove Garlic
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube
- ½ Teaspoon Mixed Herbs
- 1litre of cold water

Options

- Add a few chilli flakes
- Add a diced potato for a bit more body

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel and dice the carrot
- Wash and dice the Peppers
- Peel and dice the Potato
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

You can be a bit rustic with the chopping and dicing as this is going to be blitzed anyway.

Be sure to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Pop the carrots and potato in the large saucepan and barely cover them with water.

Add the stock cube, onion, garlic and the mixed herbs.

Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft – around 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time.

Add the diced peppers. Return to the boil and simmer for a further 10 minutes.

One litre of water might not be enough, but it is easier to add more than it is to boil off the excess!

I need to add 250ml of water at this stage but you may prefer a thicker soup.

Take off the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes.

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Notes

Vegetable stock cubes are not as salty as the ham or beef cubes so you might want to add a little salt.

Sweet Peppers can be quite expensive but this is a great soup if you can get them marked down in price as they near their use-by date. We are cooking and blitzing them – not eating them raw in a salad!

Dates on Food Packaging

Use-by for safety **Best-Before** for quality

Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	0000		4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot
- Dicing and Slicing Sweet (Bell) Peppers



Starting to prep the sweet peppers



You can use any colour of peppers



Start to soften the vegetables



Add the diced peppers for the final stage of the cooking

Chicken & Sweetcorn Soup

Ingredients

- 1 Chicken Breast approx. 250g
- 1litre Water
- 1tsp Diced Garlic
- 3 Medium Spring Onion 30g
- 100g Sweetcorn
- 1 Small or Medium Egg
- 2 tsp Cornflour
- Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- Black Pepper
- Knob of butter or splash of Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Options

 This is a pretty traditional recipe and I really don't have many variants of this.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Kitchen scissors
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the spring onion



Method

Add a splash of rapeseed or sunflower oil to the bottom of the pan and heat gently.

Add the chicken.

If you are using chicken breasts, use a fork to hold the chicken and the scissors to cut the chicken, right into the pot. Do not wash the chicken.

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Use a spatula or two forks to split the chunks of cooked chicken into fine shreds.

Tip: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk so you might want to pour off some of that liquid.



Add the water and stock cube to the pot and simmer for 10 minutes.

Add the cornflour to a mug with a splash of water and mix to a smooth paste. Add to the pot.

Add the spring onion and sweetcorn.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Beat the egg in a bowl.

Gently pour the egg into the pot, moving it gently with the spatula until you see the strings of cooked egg appear. Don't over mix the egg in the soup pot as the strings will break up.

Taste and season as required. Probably does not need salt but a little black pepper works for me.

Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 275g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

4 min 10 min

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

You can garnish with some shredded spring onion.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

• Dicing and Slicing Spring Onions

Dicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast over the pot and cut into rough chunks with the kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put the fork and scissors right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.



A thick version of the soup that can give more portions with the same great taste if you add a little extra water.

Chicken, Leek & Potato Soup

Ingredients

- 500g Potato
- 100g Leek (1 medium)
- 50g Diced Onion (1 Mug)
- 170g- 200g Pack of cooked chicken pieces
- 1 Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- 1 litre Cold Water
- Salt and Pepper

Options

 You can use fresh chicken but it's a lot of hassle for such a small amount. Maybe ok if you have a lot of fresh chicken for other dishes and you have a spare breast that you can dice!

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales, but not really needed as it's easy to guess the quantities "close enough".
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand.
- Peel and dice potato but don't forget to wash it thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup! You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces so they cook at different rates. See Techniques section on next page.
- Halve, wash and slice the leek.
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion.

Method

Pop the rough diced potatoes in the large saucepan and add the water.

Add the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the leek and onion and, if necessary, add more water to just cover the vegetables.

Keep an eye on this. Note that you may need to top up with a little boiling water from the kettle.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 15 minutes or until all the vegetables are soft.

Break up the chicken pieces and add to the pot. Return to the boil - but turn off the heat a minute or two after that.

You want a soup, not stovies, so you may need to top up the water to be sure there is still plenty of liquid at the end.

That's it – nice and simple and a great change to the traditional leek & potato soup.

Notes

There is a lot of waste when peeling potatoes — I've seen it as much as 25% of the gross weight. You need to buy a 1Kg bag of potatoes to guarantee 750g of peeled potato. If you end up with more than the 500g we need here, that's ok — stick it in the pot or make some tatties for dinner!

It's best to use a potato variety that is classed as "good for roasting or chips" as they break down better than "boilers". Consider varieties such as Desiree, King Edward, Marris Piper or a general all-rounder that is very common in supermarkets. It's not so good with firm or waxy potato such as Charlotte but it's ok if that's all you have.

This recipe is easy to scale and the proportion of the vegetables is not at all important.

Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	000		4	X
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Washing and Slicing Leeks

Rough Diced Potato for Soup or Stovies

You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces that will cook at different rates.

This will give you small pieces that break down into the liquid, but you still leave you with some decent sized chunks in the dish.



The big chunks will break down a little, and as a minimum, they will lose their sharp edges and become a bit more "rounded".

Courgette & Potato Soup

Ingredients

- 300g Diced Potato
- 300g Yellow Courgette
- 100g Diced Onion
- 100g Diced Carrot
- 1 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cube
- ½ Teaspoon Mixed Herbs
- 1litre of cold water

Options

- This looks best with yellow courgettes, but I guess you can also do it with green courgettes.
- Add a few chilli flakes
- Add a clove of diced garlic for extra flavour

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand.
- Peel, dice and wash the Potato
- Wash and dice the Courgette do not peel!
- Peel and dice the Carrot
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

You can be a bit rustic with the chopping and dicing as this is going to be blitzed anyway.

Be sure to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Pop the vegetables in the large saucepan and barely cover the with water.

Add the stock cube and the mixed herbs.

Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft – around 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time.

One litre of water might not be enough, but it is easier to add more than it is to boil off the excess!

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Notes

Vegetable stock cubes are not as salty as the ham or beef cubes so you might want to add a little salt.



Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	2000		4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot
- Dicing and Slicing Courgette



Yellow courgette from the garden with the courgette plant in the background.

Yellow courgettes are not so common in the supermarkets, but they are very easy to grow, even in a pot on the balcony.

Cullen Skink

Ingredients

- 250g Smoked Haddock
- 150g Chopped Onion 1 Medium
- 400g Diced Potato 2 Medium
- 250ml Semi-Skimmed or full-fat milk
- 500ml Water
- 1 Medium Spring Onion
- Black Pepper
- Knob of butter or splash of Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Options

• This is a pretty traditional recipe, and I really don't have many variants of this.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Remove the skin from the smoked haddock.
 Some recipes say to remove the skin once the haddock is cooked. If that's what you prefer then go for it!
- Peel and dice the Potato
- Dice the onion
- Slice the spring onion

Method

Add the butter or oil to a large pan and put over a medium heat to soften the onions. About 5 minutes.

Add the water and potato to the pot and simmer for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, add the milk and haddock to the second pan. Bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, scoop oot the haddock and put in a bowl. Use a couple of forks to split (flake) the haddock. This is the last chance to remove any remaining fish skin.

Keep the milk as you will need that in a few minutes.

Once the potato is cooked but not too soft, throw the haddock in the potato pot, adding the milk and the spring onion.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Taste and season as required. Probably does not need salt but a little black pepper works for me.



Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 275g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes

There are no special techniques or principles at play in this recipe. It's a much-simplified version of the traditional method as I use less smoked haddock. This gives a much milder taste suitable for inclusion in Marion's Meals.

French Cabbage Soup

Ingredients

- 250g Cabbage (½ small cabbage)
- 100g Onion (1 medium)
- 1 litre cold water
- 1 Knorr Beef Stock Cube
- Dessert spoon of flour
- Teaspoon Dried Thyme
- 2 Bay leaves
- ½ Glass of Red Wine
- Splash of Vegetable or Rapeseed Oil
- Small knob of butter

Options

If serving fresh, you can add a large cheesy crouton.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Kitchen Scales
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Dessert Spoon
- Teaspoon

Preparation

- Get your ingredients and equipment to hand
- Shred the cabbage
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

Method

Soften the onions in a saucepan with the oil and butter – maybe 8 to 10 minutes but the timing is not critical.

Add flour and stir it in for 1 minute or so. This sooks up the oil and butter and stops the soup feeling "greasy".

Add the water, cabbage and the stock cubes and bring to the boil.

Throw in the bay leaves and thyme at this thyme(!) and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the red wine and simmer for a further 15 minutes. You should probably cover the pot when simmering (for all sorts of reasons!)

Remove the bay leaves and you are done.

Now, you can either serve as is, add the crouton or allow to cool before freezing.

Notes

This recipe does not really need added salt as there is enough salt in the stock cube.

If you use very old, or poor-quality thyme, it may not soften during the short cooking process and you can be left with unpleasant shards – like splinters – of thyme in your mouth. Yuk!

You probably don't need to measure out the cabbage or the water exactly as there's a lot of flexibility in these numbers. If you used 2 litres of water, you get double the portions - and still have a perfectly acceptable soup.



Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Shredding Cabbage
- Flour in soup
- Wine in soup





Croutons

- White Bread
- Grated Cheese (Gruyere preferred but cheddar will do!)

Cut circles in white bread and top with the grated cheese.

Place the crouton on top of the soup in a bowl and stick it under the grill or in the oven until the cheese melts and bubbles.

French Onion Soup

Ingredients

- 400g Onion (4 medium)
- 1 litre cold water
- 1 Knorr Beef Stock Cube
- Dessert spoon of flour
- Teaspoon Dried Thyme
- 2 Bay leaves
- ½ Glass of Red Wine
- Splash of Vegetable or Rapeseed Oil
- Small knob of butter

Options

If serving fresh, you can add a large cheesy crouton.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Kitchen Scales
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Dessert Spoon
- Teaspoon

Preparation

- Get your ingredients and equipment to hand
- Slice the onion. This recipe is not really suited for frozen diced onion as we want big, thin, slices on onion in the finished soup.

Method

Soften the onions in a saucepan with the oil and butter – maybe 8 to 10 minutes but the timing is not critical.

Add flour and stir it in for 1 minute or so. This sooks up the oil and butter and stops the soup feeling "greasy".

Add the water and the stock cubes and bring to the boil.

Throw in the bay leaves and thyme at this thyme(!) and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the red wine and simmer for a further 15 minutes. You should probably cover the pot when simmering (for all sorts of reasons!)

Remove the bay leaves and you are done.

Notes

This recipe does not really need added salt as there is enough salt in the stock cube.

You probably don't need to measure out the onions or the water exactly as there's a lot of flexibility in these numbers. If you used 2 litres of water, you get double the portions - and still have a perfectly acceptable soup.

Don't skimp on the onions!

Note that if you use very old, or poor-quality thyme, it may not soften during the short cooking process and you can be left with unpleasant shards – like splinters – of thyme in your mouth. Yuk!

Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Flour in soup
- Wine in soup

Croutons

- White Bread
- Grated Cheese (Gruyere preferred but cheddar will do!)

Cut circles in white bread and top with the grated

Place the crouton on top of the soup in a bowl and stick it under the grill or in the oven until the cheese melts and bubbles.

Garden Vegetable Soup

Ingredients

- 100g Red Lentils
- 100g Chunky Diced Onion
- 100g Brussels Sprouts 12 medium
- 150g Potato 1 large
- 100g Carrot
- 100g Turnip ½ small
- 70g Leek
- 2 litres Cold Water
- 1 tsp Salt

Options

- You can use this as the base for other variants
 adding or exchanging for other vegetables
- This soup is a variant of standard vegetable soup – the difference being that all vegetables are commonplace in a basic Scottish vegetable garden.
- Substituting barley for lentils makes this a "broth" but as I don't like barley, I don't have a full recipe for that!
- I don't use a stock cube as the fresh garden vegetables have great flavour. This is why I add salt in this recipe.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Wash the lentils in a sieve, then wash them again. Then wash them again. Bought lentils are filthy with bits of grass, seeds and muck. The water should be clear – not murky!
- Dice the onion.
- Peel and dice the other veg but don't forget to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!
- Peel and halve the Brussels Sprouts.

Method

Pop the washed lentils in the large saucepan and add ¼ of the water (about 500ml).

Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until the lentils are swollen and soft.

Keep an eye on this and stir from time to time.

You may need to add more water as the lentils swell.

Add the onion, carrot, turnip and potato. Add the rest of the water to cover the vegetables.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time otherwise it may stick to the bottom.

Add the leek and brussels sprouts and simmer for a further 15 minutes.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Now the soup is cooked, you have options on how you prepare it for serving.

- 1. Serve "as is", clear and with chunky veg. This is by far the best in terms of look and taste!
- 2. Use a potato masher, lightly, for an opaque liquid with some crushed and chunky veg.
- I hate to suggest this as it's a waste of great fresh vegetables, but, you can blitz fully for a "cream of vegetable" consistency to which you not obliged to add milk or cream at the time of serving.

Notes

I'm going to repeat myself – wash the lentils thoroughly!

This recipe is easy to scale and the proportion of the vegetables is not at all important.

Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 225g

Storage Container Large Plastic

225g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	3000		4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I like to serve with part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Dicing and Slicing Turnip

Washing Lentils

Method 1: Pour the bag of lentils into a sieve or colander and plunge into a large pot of water.

Sloosh about until the water is getting dirty and remove the sieve of lentils. You might need to get your fingers in there to move the lentils around and to help with the wash.

Replace the water with fresh, clean, water and repeat 3 or 4 times.

Method 2: You could try holding the lentils in a sieve under running water for a few minutes, but I prefer the Method 1 as you can really see the difference when the lentils are clean.

Method 3: Tip the lentils into a large pan or bowl and fill with water. Sloosh around then empty the water through a sieve. Return the lentils to the bowl and repeat 3 or 4 times. I still prefer Method 1 as this Method 3 can be a clert as you empty and refill the sieve.





Lentils before and after washing

Leek & Potato Soup

Ingredients

- 1Kg Potato
- 250g Leek (2 medium)
- 100g Diced Onion (1 medium)
- 1 Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- 2 litres Cold Water
- Salt and Pepper

Options

 You can serve this chunky, "cream-of" or somewhere in between.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales, but not really needed as it's easy to guess the quantities "close enough".
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel and dice potato but don't forget to wash it thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup! You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces so they cook at different rates. See Techniques section on next page.
- Halve, wash and slice the leek.
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion.

Method

Pop the rough diced potatoes in the large saucepan and add the water.

Add the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the leek and onion and, if necessary, add more water to just cover the vegetables.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 20 minutes or until all the vegetables are soft.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time otherwise it may stick to the bottom.

Now the soup is cooked, you have 3 options on how you prepare it for serving.

- 1. Serve "as is", clear and with chunky potato.
- 2. Use a potato masher, lightly, for an opaque liquid with some crushed and chunky potato.
- Blitz fully for a "cream of leek & potato" consistency to which you not obliged to add milk or cream at the time of serving!

Notes

There is a lot of waste when peeling potatoes — I've seen it as much as 25% of the gross weight. You need to buy a 1.5Kg bag of potatoes to guarantee 1Kg of peeled potato. If you end up with more than 1Kg, that's ok — stick it in the pot!

It's best to use a potato variety that is classed as "good for roasting or chips" as they break down better than "boilers". Consider varieties such as Desiree, King Edward, Marris Piper or a general all-rounder that is very common in supermarkets. It's not so good with firm or waxy potato such as Charlotte.

This recipe is easy to scale and the proportion of the vegetables is not at all important.

Number of portions 10 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

I tend to give the soup a bash as in Method 2 above, and box up 5 portions. What is left can be blitzed to make a further 5 portions of Method 3 – with a Cream of Leek and Potato consistency.

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	2000		4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

I think this soup improves massively with a good portion of fresh, ground black pepper.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I like to serve with part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Washing and Slicing Leeks

Rough Diced Potato for Soup or Stovies

You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces that will cook at different rates.

This will give you small pieces that break down into the liquid, but you still leave you with some decent sized chunks in the dish.



The big chunks will break down a little, and as a minimum, they will lose their sharp edges and become a bit more "rounded".

Leek, Potato & Rice Soup

Ingredients

- 500g Potato
- 100g Leek (1 medium)
- 50g Diced Onion (1 Mug)
- 50g Risotto Rice (1 Mug)
- 1 Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- 1 litre Cold Water
- Salt and Pepper

Options

- You can use this as the base for other variants
 - o Add chicken chunks

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales, but not really needed as it's easy to guess the quantities "close enough".
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel and dice potato but don't forget to wash it thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup! You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces so they cook at different rates. See Techniques section on next page.
- Halve, wash and slice the leek.
- · Wash the rice.
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion.



Method

Pop the rough diced potatoes in the large saucepan and add the water.

Add the rice and the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the leek and onion and, if necessary, add more water to just cover the vegetables.

Keep an eye on this and note that the rice will sook up a lot of water so you may need to top up.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 15 minutes or until all the vegetables are soft, and the rice has lost the crunchy bit in the middle.

You want a soup, not stovies, so you may need to top up the water to be sure there is still plenty of liquid at the end.

That's it – nice and simple and a great change to the traditional leek & potato soup.

Notes

There is a lot of waste when peeling potatoes — I've seen it as much as 25% of the gross weight. You need to buy a 1Kg bag of potatoes to guarantee 750g of peeled potato. If you end up with more than the 500g we need here, that's ok — stick it in the pot or make some tatties for dinner!

It's best to use a potato variety that is classed as "good for roasting or chips" as they break down better than "boilers". Consider varieties such as Desiree, King Edward, Marris Piper or a general all-rounder that is very common in supermarkets. It's not so good with firm or waxy potato such as Charlotte but it's ok if that's all you have.

This recipe is easy to scale and the proportion of the vegetables is not at all important.

Don't overdo the rice though!

Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	0000		4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I think this soup improves massively with a good portion of fresh, ground black pepper.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Washing and Slicing Leeks

Rough Diced Potato for Soup or Stovies

You want to have a mixture of large and small pieces that will cook at different rates.

This will give you small pieces that break down into the liquid, but you still leave you with some decent sized chunks in the dish.



The big chunks will break down a little, and as a minimum, they will lose their sharp edges and become a bit more "rounded".

Lentil Soup

Ingredients

- 500g Red Lentils
- 250g Carrot
- 150g Diced Onion
- 150g Potato
- 200g Pancetta or Lardons
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube

Options

- Skip the pancetta and stock cube for a vegetarian option.
- Add a tin of chopped tomatoes and a carton of passata for Lentil and Tomato Soup.
- Add a handful of washed risotto rice for Lentil and Rice Soup.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Wash the lentils in a sieve, then wash them again. Then wash them again. Bought lentils are filthy with bits of grass, seeds and muck.
 The water should be clear – not murky!
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion. There is no need to soften or pre-fry the onion.
- Peel and dice the potato and wash thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!
- Peel and dice the carrot.

Method

Pop the washed lentils in the large saucepan and cover with water.

Add the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until the lentils are swollen and soft.

Keep an eye on this and stir from time to time.

You will need to add more water as the lentils swell.

Add the other vegetables and the pancetta, return to the boil and simmer for a further 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time otherwise it will stick to the bottom and burn.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Notes

I'm going to repeat myself – wash the lentils thoroughly!

200g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.

This recipe is easy to scale down, but I make this quantity since 500g is a common bag size for lentils, and this gives you plenty extra portions to keep in the freezer.

The largest quantity I have made is 4-times this – enough for 40 "golf club" sized portions.



Number of portions 10 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			*	
4 min		10 min		

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

If you are heating from the freezer, I like to serve with part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots

Washing Lentils

Method 1: Pour the bag of lentils into a sieve or colander and plunge into a large pot of water.

Sloosh about until the water is getting dirty and remove the sieve of lentils. You might need to get your fingers in there to move them around and to help with the wash.

Replace the water with fresh, clean, water and repeat 3 or 4 times.

Method 2: You could try holding the lentils in a sieve under running water for a few minutes, but I prefer the Method 1 as you can really see the difference when the lentils are clean.

Method 3: Tip the lentils into a large pan or bowl and fill with water. Sloosh around then empty the water through a sieve. Return the lentils to the bowl and repeat 3 or 4 times. I still prefer Method 1 as this Method 3 can be a clert as you empty and refill the sieve.





Lentils before and after washing

Minestrone

Note: This does not fully fit the ethos of Marion's Meals simply because it has so many ingredients, including garlic. It's too nice to leave out though!

Ingredients

- Splash of olive oil
- 1 diced onion
- 1 diced carrot
- 2 large celery sticks, chunky chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- A decent squirt of tomato purée (2 tsp)
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 litre water
- 1 Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- 400g tin mixed beans (or cannellini beans)
 Drain and rinse.
- 100g spaghetti, broken into short lengths
- ¼ green cabbage, finely shredded
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Options

- Use macaroni instead of spaghetti, use chopped leak instead of cabbage, add diced turnip. With these traditional Scottish vegetables and MacAroni, I call this soup Macestrone! Good with a dash if chilli flakes.
- I think the celery is needed in this soup, even though I'm not a big fan of the flavour. It's ok without the celery though.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Dice and prep the other ingredients

Method

We need to add ingredients to the pot in different phases as they need a different time to cook. For example, the carrot needs a lot more time to cook than the cabbage does.

Put the oil, onion, carrot and celery in the bottom of a pan on a medium heat. Soften the vegetables for about 10 minutes. Add a little bit salt and pepper but don't get too heavy-handed with it! We will get a chance to add more salt and pepper at the end.

Add the garlic and fry for another minute.

Add the water, stock cube and tomatoes.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes.

Add the beans and pasta.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 10 minutes.

Test that the pasta is cooked, giving it a few more minutes cooking time if you need to.

Add the cabbage and simmer for another 2 minutes.

The soup tends to be a bit thick for my liking but some folk like it this way. You can always add a splash of hot water if you prefer it thinner.

You might also want to add a bit more salt and pepper.

Notes

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time to stop it sticking to the bottom of the pan.

Number of portions 6 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

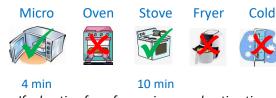
Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.



If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to defrost first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra water if you think the soup is too thick.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I like to serve by finishing part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Slicing Cabbage

There are no special techniques or principles at play in this recipe.

Parsnip Soup

Ingredients

- 100g Diced Potato
- 250g Parsnip
- 100g Carrot
- 100g Diced Onion
- 1 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cube
- ½ Teaspoon Thyme
- 1litre of cold water

Options

- Roast the parsnips beforehand for a much better and fuller flavour (my preferred method!)
- Add a clove of diced garlic for extra flavour

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel, dice and wash the Potato
- Wash and dice the Parsnips
- Peel and dice the Carrot
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

You can be a bit rustic with the chopping and dicing as this is going to be blitzed anyway.

Be sure to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Pop the vegetables in the large saucepan and cover them with water.

Add the stock cube and the thyme.

Bring to the boil and simmer until the vegetables are soft – around 20 minutes.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time.

One litre of water might not be enough, but it is easier to add more than it is to boil off the excess!

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Adding a bit of cream or milk is a nice touch if you are not planning on freezing this.

Notes

Vegetable stock cubes are not as salty as the ham or beef cubes so you might want to add a little salt.

Many recipes ask you to fry the onions in oil and butter before adding to the soup, but I don't think this is essential.

Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 225g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrot

Pea & Ham Soup

Ingredients

- 800g 900g of Tinned Mushy Peas
- 100g Diced Onion (1 mug)
- 100g Fine, Diced Carrot (1 mug)
- 2 mugs cold water
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube
- 1 Cup Ham Trim (or box of Pancetta, or Lardons, or 2 slices of diced Smoked Bacon
- (Maybe) generous pinch of dried or fresh mint
- Drizzle of Extra Virgin Olive Oil (any halfdecent vegetable or sunflower oil will do)

Options

- If Mushy Peas don't have mint included, you will need a pinch of mint
- If you can't get mushy peas, then marrowfat peas will also work if you be sure to add the mint.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Mug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment ready
- Dice the carrot best with fresh carrot
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

Method

You can do this with one saucepan, but it's much easier to do it with two.

Soften the onions and carrot in a saucepan with a little Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

If using pancetta, lardons or bacon, add that to the pot for 5 to 10 minutes, until cooked and slightly brown.

You would not need to pre-cook ham trim that has already been cooked.

If using one saucepan, decant the onion and carrot into a bowl.

Empty the tins of peas into the saucepan, add the water, bring to a gentle boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Keep stirring.

If tinned peas are not flavoured with mint, now's the time to add it.

Using a hand- blender, blitz the peas to a perfect smooth consistency.

Add the onions and carrot (with pancetta, lardons, bacon or ham trim.

Return to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. You may need a little bit longer if the carrots are not soft enough.

Notes

This recipe does not really need added salt as there is enough salt in the stock cube and ham.

200g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.



Number of portions 4 to 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

4 min 10 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots

Soften Carrots

If you need to soften or pre-cook, fine-diced carrots, but without too much added water for a soup, you have a couple of choices.

- 1. Fry them in a saucepan along with the onions and pancetta, or,
- 2. Simmer them for 15 20 minutes in unsalted water and drain them before you add them to the soup.

I prefer option 2 but I know folks that swear by option 1.

Red Cabbage Soup

Ingredients

- 250g Red Cabbage (1/4 cabbage)
- 100g Onion (1 medium)
- 1 litre cold water
- 1 Knorr Beef Stock Cube
- Dessert spoon of flour
- Teaspoon Dried Thyme
- 2 Bay leaves
- 1/2 Glass of Red Wine
- Splash of Vegetable or Rapeseed Oil
- Small knob of butter

Options

 If serving fresh, you can add a large cheesy crouton.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Kitchen Scales
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Dessert Spoon
- Teaspoon

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Shred the cabbage
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

Method

Soften the onion in the saucepan with a splash of vegetable oil and a small knob of butter.

Add the flour and mix through for a couple of minutes to "dry" the onions.

Add the water and bring to the boil.

Add the cabbage, stock cube, bay leaf and thyme

Bring back to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the wine and simmer for another 15 minutes.

Remove the bay leaf and you are ready to serve.

Notes

This recipe does not really need added salt as there is enough salt in the stock cube.

You probably don't need to measure out the cabbage or the water exactly as there's a lot of flexibility in these numbers. If you used 2 litres of water you get double the portions - and still have a perfectly acceptable soup.

You can skip the red wine. It's added to bring some acidity to the sweetness of the cabbage and help bring out the flavour of the caramelisation on the onions. Clearly the wine is not there to add colour to the soup!



Number of portions 4 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Shredding Cabbage
- Flour in soup
- Wine in soup

Croutons

- White Bread
- Grated Cheese (Gruyere preferred but cheddar will do!)

Cut circles in white bread and top with the grated cheese.

Place the crouton on top of the soup in a bowl and stick it under the grill or in the oven until the cheese melts and bubbles.

Tomato & Lentil Soup

Ingredients

- 100g Red Lentils
- 150g Diced Onion (1 Medium)
- 50 g Diced Carrot
- 1 Clove Garlic
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube
- 500g Box of Passata
- 2 or 4 shakes of ground black pepper.
- 1 Litre + 250 ml of Cold Water

Options

- Add a few chilli flakes
- Substitute a veg stock cube for the ham stock cube if you want a vegetarian option
- You could try playing with other herbs such as basil or thyme.
- Use chopped tomatoes instead of passata.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Fine dice the carrot and garlic



Method

Wash the lentils thoroughly and add to the saucepan. Add the 1 litre of water.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes or until the lentil swell and go soft.

Add the onion, carrot, stock cube and garlic.

Return to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes.

Empty box of passata into the saucepan. You can use the additional 250ml of water to rinse the passata box before adding the water to the pot.

You might need to take a few minutes to slowly mix the soup as the passata does not mix itself!

Return to a gentle simmer for 15 minutes.

This is a recipe with very light seasoning so it's best to taste and, if required, season with more herbs, salt and pepper, particularly if you are not using the ham stock cube.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time to stop it sticking to the bottom of the pan.

Notes

Sometimes you can get "Italian Seasoned" tomatoes or passata so you may need to add less herbs.

You might want to use the spatula to squish any large bits of the chopped tomato!

Number of portions 6 Final Portion Size 225g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	200		4	
4 min		10 min		
If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.				

if remeating from frozen, merease nearing time

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Washing Lentils

There are no special techniques or principles at play in this recipe. It's a much-simplified version of the traditional method that would use fresh tomatoes.

I'm not saying it is as good, but 1 hour rather than 3 hours to prepare and cook is quite appealing!

It can also be made with things in most store cupboards, without a special trip to the grocers.



Tomato & Rice Soup

Ingredients

- 400g Tinned Chopped Tomatoes
- 500g Box of Passata
- 50g Risotto Rice (1 Mug)
- 50g Diced Onion (1 Mug)
- 150g diced potato (2 small ones)
- ½ Teaspoon Mixed Herbs
- ½ Teaspoon of Salt
- 2 or 4 shakes of ground black pepper.
- 500ml + 100ml of Cold Water

Options

- Add a few chilli flakes
- Add a clove of fine-diced or grated garlic
- You could try playing with other herbs such as basil or thyme.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Mug or Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel, dice and wash the Potato. Try for a very small dice as we want the potato to practically melt away in the cooking process.
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion



Method

Pop the diced and washed potato in the saucepan along with the rice and onion. Add the 500ml water and the salt.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes or until the rice loses the crunchy bit in the middle.

The potato has practically disappeared - and that is intended. We will not be blitzing this soup.

Empty the tin of tomatoes and box of passata into the saucepan. You can use the additional 100ml of water to rinse the tomato tin and passata box.

Add the mixed herbs and pepper.

Return to a gentle simmer for 10 minutes.

This is a recipe with very light seasoning so it's best to taste and, if required, season with more herbs, salt and pepper.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time to stop it sticking to the bottom of the pan.

Notes

Sometimes you can get "Italian Seasoned" tomatoes or passata so you may need to add less herbs. I sometime include a single clove of garlic for a better overall flavour.

You might want to use the spatula to squish any large bits of the chopped tomato!

Number of portions 6 Final Portion Size 225g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

4 min 10 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes

There are no special techniques or principles at play in this recipe. It's a much-simplified version of the traditional method that would use fresh tomatoes.

I'm not saying it is as good, but 30 minutes rather than 3 hours to make it is quite appealing!

It can also be made with things in most store cupboards, without a special trip to the grocers.



Tomato Soup

Ingredients

- 400g of Tinned Chopped Tomatoes
- 500g box of Passata
- 50g Diced Onion (1 Mug)
- 150g diced potato (2 small ones)
- ½ Teaspoon Mixed Herbs
- 200ml Semi-Skimmed Milk (1 Mug)

Options

Add a few chilli flakes

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Mug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get your ingredients and equipment to hand
- Peel and dice the Potato
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion

Method

Peel and dice the potato and wash thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Pop the potato and onion in the saucepan and barely cover them with water as we want to use the water in the soup – but not too much! Keep an eye on this and add a little more water if it gets too low before the potato is cooked.

Boil until soft – around 15 - 20 minutes depending on the potato type and how small you have diced it.

Add the mixed herbs

Empty the tin of tomatoes and box of passata into the saucepan and bring to a gentle boil.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time

Using a hand- blender, blitz everything to a perfect smooth consistency.

Taste and season with more herbs, salt or pepper if required.

Add the milk and stir it in then return it to a gentle boil for few minutes.

Notes

Sometimes you can get "Italian Seasoned" tomatoes or passata so you may need to add less herbs. I sometime include a single clove of garlic for a better overall flavour.

Number of portions 5 to 7 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	2000		4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes

There are no special techniques or principles at play in this recipe. It's a much-simplified version of the traditional method that would use fresh tomatoes.

I'm not saying it is as good, but 30 minutes rather than 3 hours to make it is quite appealing!

It can also be made with things in most store cupboards, without a special trip to the grocers.

Vegetable Soup

Ingredients

- 100g Red Lentils
- 150g Potato
- 150g Carrot
- 150g Turnip
- 100g Diced Onion
- 100g Leek
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube
- 2 litres Cold Water

Options

- You can use this as the base for other variants

 adding or exchanging for other vegetables
 that are in season or in your garden.
- I'm not so keen on adding strong flavoured vegetables such as celery, parsnip or brussels sprouts as that detracts from this traditional recipe.
- Substituting barley for lentils makes this a "broth" but as I don't like barley, I don't have a full recipe for that!
- Exchange the ham stock cube for a vegetable stock cube to get a vegetarian option.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Large Saucepan
- Kitchen Scales
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Wash the lentils in a sieve, then wash them again. Then wash them again. Bought lentils are filthy with bits of grass, seeds and muck. The water should be clear – not murky!
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion.
- Peel and dice the other veg but don't forget to wash the potato thoroughly to reduce the starch and scum in the soup!

Method

Pop the washed lentils in the large saucepan and add the water.

Add the stock cube.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until the lentils are swollen and soft.

Keep an eye on this and stir from time to time.

You may need to add more water as the lentils swell.

Add the other vegetables and, if necessary, add more water to cover the vegetables.

Return to the boil and simmer for a further 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.

Keep an eye on this, and gently stir from time to time otherwise it will stick to the bottom.

Taste and season with salt or pepper if required.

Now the soup is cooked, you have options on how you prepare it for serving.

- Serve "as is", clear and with chunky veg.
- Use a potato masher, lightly, for an opaque liquid with some crushed and chunky veg.
- Blitz fully for a "cream of vegetable" consistency to which you not obliged to add milk or cream at the time of serving.

Notes

I'm going to repeat myself – wash the lentils thoroughly!

200g portion is approximately 1½ ladles, based on the size of ladle I use! You will get used to your own size through time.

This recipe is easy to scale and the proportion of the vegetables is not at all important.



Number of portions 5 Final Portion Size 200g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

Serve fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
4 min		10 min		

 ${\it If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.}$

Preferably thawed overnight before heating.

If you heat on the stove top, be sure to thaw first, or stick in the microwave for a few minutes to start the defrost.

You can add extra milk or water if you think the soup is too thick.

Be sure the soup is piping hot throughout before serving.

Serve in a soup bowl or mug with crusty bread.

I like to serve with part-baked baguettes or breads that I can prepare just ahead of time.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Dicing and Slicing Turnip

Washing Lentils

Method 1: Pour the bag of lentils into a sieve or colander and plunge into a large pot of water.

Sloosh about until the water is getting dirty and remove the sieve of lentils. You might need to get your fingers in there to move them around and to help with the wash.

Replace the water with fresh, clean, water and repeat 3 or 4 times.

Method 2: You could try holding the lentils in a sieve under running water for a few minutes, but I prefer the Method 1 as you can really see the difference when the lentils are clean.

Method 3: Tip the lentils into a large pan or bowl and fill with water. Sloosh around then empty the water through a sieve. Return the lentils to the bowl and repeat 3 or 4 times. I still prefer Method 1 as this Method 3 can be a clert as you empty and refill the sieve.





Lentils before and after washing



Main Meals

Balmoral Chicken	97
Bean Stew	99
Beef Hotpot	101
Beef Olives	103
Bolognaise	105
Breakfast in a Box	107
Chicken & Leek Pie	109
Chicken & Sweetcorn	111
Chicken Casserole	113
Chicken & Water Chestnuts	115
Cottage Pie (Beef)	117
Farmer's Pie (Pork)	119
Fillet Steak & Black Beans	121
Fish Pie	123
Haggis, Neeps & Tatties	125
Meatballs	127
Mince & Tatties	129
Pork Casserole	131
"Roast" Beef - Slow Cooked	133
Sausage Casserole	135
Sausage & Potato Pie	137
Shepherd's Pie (Lamb)	139
Shepherd's Pie (Turkey)	141
St David's Chicken	143
Stovies	145

Balmoral Chicken

Ingredients

- 2 Chicken Breasts
- 2 Slices Haggis
- 12 Rashers Streaky Bacon
- Powdered Chicken Casserole Sauce

Options

 If you are going to eat this fresh, it's much nicer with a Creamy Pepper Sauce. This recipe uses a casserole sauce (or chicken gravy) as that is better for freezing

Equipment

- Baking Tray
- Frying Pan
- Sharp knife
- Tin foil and Cling Film
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get everything ready before you touch the chicken
 - Get the oven on to heat
 - Get the tinfoil ready for each breast
 - Cover the chopping board with cling film
 - Get the oil in the frying pan



Method

Get the oven on to pre-Heat to 180°.

Break up the haggis slices into a bowl.

Get two squares of tin foil that will be large enough to wrap each chicken breast.

Lay 6 strips of streaky bacon on each of the foil squares.

Cover your chopping board with cling film – it's much easier when you come to clean the board!

Put the chicken on the cling film and insert the knife in the side, near the thick end of the breast. Work it around inside to create a pocket. Don't cut through the chicken – especially on the bottom!

Use the haggis to stuff each breast.

Turn over the breast and lay it bottom up on top of the streaky bacon.

Lift the streaky bacon up and around the base of the chicken.

This way, the join will end up underneath the chicken for cooking.

Turn the frying pan to a moderate to high heat with a splash of Sunflower oil.

Once the oil is ready, place the chicken in the frying pan to sear the bottom. This should take no more than 5 or 6 minutes.

Transfer the chicken back to the tin foil and wrap the foil around.

Pop the baking sheet in the oven for 40 minutes. Test the chicken with a skewer – the juices should run clear.

Follow the instructions on the sauce packet to make the chicken (casserole) gravy.



Number of portions 2
Final Portion Size 250g
Storage Container Large Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a foil tray for individual meals.

Add the Chicken to the bottom of the foil tray and add a ladle of gravy over the chicken.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from thawed are a guide only.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Fryer Cold











30 mi

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Pre-heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, lift the chicken out of the foil tray and transfer to the plate. Pour the gravy over the chicken.

Add your sides from the Marion's Meals selection of potatoes and vegetables.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

This recipe only requires one specific technique that is worth a mention.

Slicing chicken breast for stuffing.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put all utensils right into the dishwasher or a
basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.

Consider using powder-free latex gloves when handling chicken.



Get the bacon ready to wrap the chicken



Place the stuffed chicken face down on the bacon



Wrap the bacon so the seam is on the underside



Flash-fry the bottom to seal the bacon. Optionally, turn over and brown the top.

Bean Stew

Ingredients

- 400g Tin Mixed Beans
- 400g Tin Chopped Tomato
- 50g frozen diced onion
- 100g Pancetta, Lardons or Chorizo
- 100g Courgette
- 50g Diced Sweet Pepper
- ½ tsp Chilli Flakes (Optional)
- 1 tsp Mixed Herbs
- Salt & Pepper to Taste
- Splash of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 300g dry Pasta Twirls (Fusilli) (3 Mugs)

Quantities are just a guide as the exact numbers don't matter that much.

Options

- You can omit any meats and make this as a vegetarian dish.
- If using Chorizo, fry in a separate pan and drain off the liquid before combining with the other ingredients.

Equipment

- Big pot
- Sharp Knife
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to do here other than dice the veg and gather together the other ingredients.



Method

Put a splash of olive oil in the pan and add the onions and pancetta.

Keep on a medium heat for 5 minutes until soft.

Add the courgette and peppers and soften for a further 5 minutes.

Now you can add the mixed beans, chopped tomato, chilli and herbs.

Taste and season.

You have the option to add some tomato puree if you are not happy with the colour!

Keep this on a simmer to keep warm and prepare the pasta.

Boil a kettle of water.

Put the pasta in another saucepan and cover with the boiling water.

Add a little salt and keep on a rolling boil for 10 minutes or until the pasta is starting to lose the chewiness.

Cook the pasta for a few minutes more if you are eating this fresh.

Tips

Also works well with other forms of pasta.



Maybe looks better if you use green courgette and green peppers?

Number of portions

Final Portion Size 225g Stew

180g Pasta

Storage Container Plastic Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray for individual meals.

Add a layer of pasta (1 ladle is about 180g) to the bottom of the plastic tray.

Add a ladle of Bean Stew on top of the pasta.

Allow to cool before freezing.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro

Oven

Stove





Fryer



Cold

4 min

20 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating but not essential. I heat this from frozen and it takes about 9 minutes in the microwave.

Add a splash of water to the tray before heating.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Can be boxed without pasta and served with mash or as a filling to a baked potato.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- **Dicing and Slicing Onions**
- Heating Marion's Meals



1 mug of dry pasta is about 100g. The weight will double when cooked.



Drain the pasta before adding to the storage tray.



Store in plastic tubs



You can eat from the tray or serve on a pre-heated plate.

Beef Hotpot

Ingredients

- 1kg diced beef
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 50g frozen diced turnip
- 50g frozen peas
- 1 x powdered Beef Casserole Sauce
- 1 kg bag of white potato.

Options

- You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip
- The powdered Peppered Beef Sauce is excellent, but far too nippy for Marion's Meals!
- Can also be topped with sliced potato instead of the mash.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 1 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

Vegetables

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the beef. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the beef until sealed.

Cover with hot water and return to a boil then simmer for 60 minutes.

We want the beef very tender so you will need to keep simmering for as much as a further 60 minutes.

Test with a fork until the beef is very tender.

It can burn very quickly so keep an eye on this. You will need to keep adding water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water left after the cooking is done.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip. Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a splash of milk and a decent knob of butter (or two!) and mash.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the beef and vegetables are cooked, add the sauce and peas to the pot.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes.

Diced Stew Weight	1kg	1,200g
Number of Portions	5	7

Meat Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1½ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See below for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Heating instructions are from chilled so must be amended for heating from frozen.

Micro











Stove





Cold

30 min

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 30 minutes from thawed, or 60 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Browning Mince and Diced Beef



225g of meat & veg in the tray



7 portions from 1,200g of diced beef



150g of mashed potato per portion



Ready for the lids and labels.

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.



Beef Olives

Ingredients

- 6 Beef Olives
- 150g Onion One Large
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g Turnip
- 75g Peas
- 75g Sweetcorn
- Powdered Beef Casserole Sauce Mix
- Salt & Pepper to Taste

Quantities are just a guide as the exact numbers don't matter that much.

Options

- You can substitute the vegetables with whatever you have available.
- Works well with the powdered Peppered Beef Casserole Mix – but far too spicy for Marion's Meals.

Equipment

- Big pot
- Baking Tray
- Tin Foil
- Sharp Knife
- Mixing Jug
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to do here other than dice the veg and gather the other ingredients.

Note: I'm happy to buy beef olives from the local butcher. They are made fresh and tend to not have additives. At the end of the day, it's just frying steak wrapped around sausage meat!

You can also get beef olives with a vegetable or sage stuffing, instead of the sausage.

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 180°.



Line the baking tray with the tinfoil and pop the beef olives in the oven for 10 minutes.

Turn the beef olives and return to the oven for a further 10 minutes.

Transfer the beef olives to the large pot and cover with water.

Add the carrot, turnip and onion, and simmer for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.

Add the peas and sweet corn and return to the boil.

Mix the powdered sauce in the jug with a little water until smooth.

Add the sauce to the pot and simmer for 5 minutes.

Tips

You can also brown the beef olives in a frying pan with a splash of oil.

Number of portions 3
Final Portion Size 325g
Storage Container Plastic Tray 3-Cell Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray for individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro









5 min

20 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

Add a splash of water to the tray before heating.

Can be served with boiled or mashed potato or a mash mix of potato, carrot and turnip.

You can use a 3-cell tray to include the mash and additional side veg in the same dish.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Heating Marion's Meals

Notes

- Two beef olives per portion.
- Freezes well in a plastic tray.



Plastic tray – you need to heat potato and vegetables separate.



3-cell tray is a complete meal.

Portions for Freezing





Serving Suggestions for Beef Olives

.

Bolognaise

Ingredients

- 750g Low Fat Beef Mince
- 400g Tin Chopped Tomato
- 150g Onion
- 150g Bell Peppers
- 100g Courgette
- 1 tsp Mixed Herbs
- 1 tsp Chopped Garlic
- 4 tsp Tomato Puree
- 100 ml Red Wine
- Salt & Pepper to Taste
- Splash of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 85g Spaghetti per person

Quantities are just a guide as the exact numbers don't matter that much.

Options

- You can substitute the beef with many other meats.
- Add ½ tsp Chilli Flakes for a wee kick!
- Add some mushrooms (I don't like them!)

Equipment

- Big pot
- Sharp Knife
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

There's not much to do here other than dice the veg and gather together the other ingredients.



This shows the use of pre-packed veg from the freezer, making it much quicker to assemble into a meal.

Method

Put a splash of olive oil in the pan and brown the mince.

Cover with water and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add the onion, peppers, garlic and herbs and simmer for a further 10 minutes

Add the tinned tomato and the courgette and simmer for a further 10 minutes.

Finally, add the tomato puree and season to taste.

Tips

Works well spaghetti or with many other forms of pasta. Goes really well as a filling to a baked potato.



Number of portions 6
Final Portion Size 250g
Storage Container Plastic Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray for individual meals.

Add a layer of pasta (1 ladle is about 180g) to the bottom of the plastic tray.

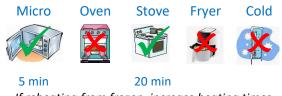
Add a ladle of bolognaise on top of the pasta.

Allow to cool before freezing.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.



If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating but not essential. I heat this from frozen and it takes about 9 minutes in the microwave.

Add a splash of water to the tray before heating.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Can be boxed without pasta and served with mash or as a filling to a baked potato.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Browning Mince
- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Cooking Pasta
- Heating Marion's Meals

Breakfast in a Box

Introduction

Fair question – Does this really need a recipe sheet?

Not really, but it does provide a good reminder of this dish.

It allows Marion to have a Sunday Breakfast any day of the week without having to cook anything.

Ok, it is much nicer with a bit egg so I suggest scrambled egg in the microwave!

Ingredients

- 4 Pork Link Sausages
- 4 slices Black Pudding
- 4 slices Haggis
- 4 slices Smoked Back Bacon
- 4 frozen Hash Browns

Options

- You can add cherry tomatoes or mushrooms
- Do not include egg it does not freeze and reheat well
- You can cook scrambled egg in a mug in the microwave or add beans if you prefer.
- You can also substitute the sausage for Beef Links or Lorne (square) sausage
- This is offered in different sizes
 - Small breakfast has ½ slice each of haggis and black pudding
 - Mega breakfast has two sausages and two slices of bacon
 - There are also variants without the haggis or black pudding

Equipment

• 1 Baking Tray

Preparation

This is so simple, there is nothing to prepare.

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 180°.

Line the baking tray with tinfoil and put the sausages on to cook for 10 minutes.

Remove the tray from the oven and turn the sausages.

Cook for a further 5 minutes.

Remove the tray from the oven to add the bacon and pop back in the oven for a further 5 minutes.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

You do not want to fully cook the meats as they will be further cooked during the reheat. If you over-cook the bacon at this stage, it will become dry and chewy when you reheat it.

Do not pre-cook the hash brown, haggis and black pudding.

Remove any skin from the haggis and black pudding. Add one slice of haggis and black pudding to the bottom of a large foil tray.

Add the sausage to the side.

Place the bacon and the hash brown on top of the haggis & black pudding.

The order of packing does make a difference!

The hash-brown doesn't really get crisp.



Number of portions

Final Portion Size 1 each of 5

items

Storage Container Large Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in large foil containers for individual portions.

If serving fresh, you will need to turn the bacon and cook for a further 5 minutes.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Fryer













Pre-heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.

It is preferred to defrost in the fridge overnight but can be heated from frozen.

Leave the lid on and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 20 minutes from thawed, or 45 minutes from frozen in an electric, fan, oven.

Your heating times may vary so be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

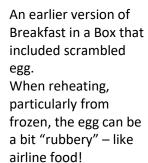
It's easy to transfer the breakfast to a pre-heated plate or it can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

No special techniques are required.







There are many variants of the breakfast from "Mini" with half black and half haggis to Mega that has two link sausages, lorne sausage and hash brown

Chicken & Leek Pie

Ingredients

- 700g Chicken Breasts or Diced Chicken
- 100g Onion
- 150g Leek 1 medium
- 200g Pancetta or Lardons
- 100g Peas
- ¾ Pint of Semi-Skimmed Milk
- 1 powdered Chicken & Leek Bake Sauce
- A splash of rapeseed or sunflower Oil

Options

- It's ok to do half-and-half peas and sweetcorn
- This recipe is for serving in a foil tray with mashed potato topping but you could serve in a 3-cell tray with separate potato and vegetables.
- Can be frozen individually in a plastic tray to be served with a baked potato.

Equipment

- Big pot
- Pair of kitchen scissors
- Sharp knife
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand.
- Dice the onion although it is much easier to use frozen onion.
- · Chop the leek.



Ready to top with mashed potato



Also goes well with a baked potato

Method

Add a splash of rapeseed or sunflower oil to the bottom of the pan and heat gently.

Add the chicken.

If you are using chicken breasts, use a fork to hold the chicken and the scissors to cut the chicken directly into the pot. Do not wash the chicken.

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Tip: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk so you might want to pour off some of that liquid.

Add the onion, leek and pancetta and keep them moving in the pot until softened.

Mix the powdered sauce with the milk and add to the pot.

Return to the boil and allow to simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Add the peas and simmer for a further minute.

Take a look at the Mashed Potato Technique overleaf.



Two-Pot Method

Number of portions 5
Final Portion Size 225g
Storage Container Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a small foil tray or a 3-Cell tray for individual meals.

Add 225g of Chicken to the bottom of the foil tray and press gently into the corners.

Add mashed potato to the top.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from thawed are a guide only.

Micro

Oven

en

Stove F

Fryer Cold













30 min

Adjust times if cooking from frozen.

It is preferred to defrost in the fridge overnight but can be heated from frozen.

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

Your heating times may vary so be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Leeks
- Mashed Potato
- Using a 3-Cell Container

Dicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast over the pot and cut into rough chunks with the kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put the fork and scissors right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.



Note that my ice-cream scoop creates balls of mashed potato that are about 70g.

Chicken & Sweetcorn

.Ingredients

- 600g Chicken Breasts or Diced Chicken
- 100g Onion
- 100g Sweet Peppers (Red & Green Mix)
- 100g Sweetcorn
- 25g Pine Nuts (Optional)
- 1 Chicken Stock Cube
- 2 tsp Cornflour
- A splash of rapeseed or sunflower Oil
- 500ml water

Options

- This is a version of the Chilli Chicken and Sweetcorn that fits the ethos of Marion's Meals. It does not include chilli and garlic.
- Some folks suggest I add pancetta or diced chorizo but it really, really, does not need it!
- This version is for serving with potato rather than fried rice. It can also be served with pasta.
- Pine nuts are expensive! I often do not include them but they are a nice touch if you want to put on a show!

Equipment

- Big pot
- Pair of kitchen scissors
- Sharp knife
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand.
- Fine dice the onion although it is much easier to use frozen onion.
- Fine dice the sweet peppers.

The trick with this recipe is to get very fine diced onion and pepper.

Tip: This can be done with frozen sweetcorn, but the Green Giant Tinned Sweetcorn is much juicier and sweeter. Problem is - the tin is too much so you need to plan another recipe to use the rest.

Method

Add a splash of rapeseed or sunflower oil to the bottom of the pan and heat gently.

Add the chicken.

If you are using chicken breasts, use a fork to hold the chicken and the scissors to cut the chicken right into the pot. Do not wash the chicken.

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Tip: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk so you will want to pour off some of that liquid.

Add the onion and peppers and keep them moving in the pot until softened.

Add the water to the pot and the stock cube. Return to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.

Mix the cornflour in a mug with a little water until smooth.

Add the cornflour to the pot and simmer for a further two minutes.

Add the sweetcorn and pine nuts and simmer for a further two minutes.

Taste and add seasoning if required – probably just a bit of black pepper.



Number of portions 3 **Final Portion Size** 300g 225g Plastic Tray **Storage Container**

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray.

Can be stored with a layer of cooked pasta in the bottom of the plastic tray.

Could also be frozen in a 3-cell tray with mashed potato and veg in the other cells.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from thawed are a guide only.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Fryer

Cold













5 min

15 min

Adjust times if cooking from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Select your potatoes and sides from Marion's Meals.

Can also be served from a large dish as part of a buffet.

Also suitable as a tapas dish.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Fine dicing onions
- Fine dicing Bell Peppers

Dicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast over the pot and cut into rough chunks with the kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & **Food Poisoning**

Do not wash the chicken. Put the fork and scissors right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water. Wash your hands.









Chicken Casserole

Ingredients

- 600g Chicken Breasts or Diced Chicken
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g Onion
- 1 small leek
- 1 Knorr Chicken Stock Cube
- 1 powdered Chicken Casserole Sauce
- A splash of rapeseed or sunflower Oil

Options

- You have a choice of container for freezing and whether you want to freeze with sides of potato and vegetables.
- You can skip the leek or you can add other vegetables such as turnip.
- This recipe is for serving in a 3-cell container.
 If you are serving in a foil tray with mashed potato topping, you may want to add extra vegetables such as turnip, peas or sweetcorn.

Equipment

- Big pot
- Pair of kitchen scissors
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the onion although it is much easier to use frozen onion.
- Dice the carrot and chop the leek.

Method

Add a splash of rapeseed or sunflower oil to the bottom of the pan and heat gently.

Add the chicken.

If you are using chicken breasts, use a fork to hold the chicken and the scissors to cut the chicken right into the pot. Do not wash the chicken.

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Tip: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk so you might want to pour off some of that liquid.

Add the onion and leek and keep them moving in the pot until softened.

Cover with water and add the chicken stock and carrot.

Bring to the boil and simmer for a further 20 minutes or until the carrot is soft.

Mix the powdered sauce with a little cold water and add to the pot.

Return to the boil and allow to simmer for a further 5 minutes.



Number of portions 5
Final Portion Size 225g
Storage Container 3-Cell Tray
Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in 3-Cell Trays for individual meals.

Add 250g of Chicken to large cell. This is about 1% ladles.

Can also be stored in a small foil tray and topped with mashed potato.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from thawed are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
	000		4	
5 min	30 min	15 min		
Plastic	Foil			
Tray	Tray			
Adjust times if cooking from frozen.				

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

Typically 5 minutes on full power but this will depend on your microwave.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Dicing and Slicing Leeks
- Topping dish with Mashed Potato
- Using a 3-Cell Container

Dicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast over the pot and cut into rough chunks with the kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put the fork and scissors right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.





Chicken & Water Chestnuts

Ingredients

- 600g Chicken (2 medium breasts)
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 200g Sweet (Bell) Peppers
- 225g tin Water Chestnuts
- 1 Clove Garlic
- 2 x 120g bags Blue Dragon Hoisin Sauce
- Knob of butter

Options

- Ok, ok, I know. We should make our own Hoisin Sauce – but it's lots of ingredients and a hassle. The Blue Dragon sauces are quick, easy and actually quite good!
- Can also be done with duck breast or fillet

steak for a special ocassion.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Very Sharp Knife
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Ice Cream Scoop

Preparation

You want to get as much ready as possible before you start working with the raw chicken

- Chunky dice the onion and peppers
- Fine dice the garlic
- Drain the water chestnuts
- Get your other ingredients to hand
- Slice the chicken into thin(ish) strips

Note

This meal does not really fit the principles of Marion's Meals as it has a flavoured sauce, but she was willing to try. Marion gave it a reluctant "ok, but not too bothered about having it again!"

Method

Add a knob of butter or some vegetable oil to the saucepan and soften the onions for about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, put another knob of butter in the second saucepan and add the chicken strips.

Remember the cooking sauce will be quite salty so take care not to add too much extra salt – if any!

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Add the water chestnuts, garlic and peppers to the onions and soften for a further 5 minutes.

Note: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk and we don't want to use that!

Use a slotted spoon to transfer the chicken to the vegetable pot.

Add the two packs of Hoisin Sauce and mix it all together.

Keep the pot on a low heat until the sauce starts to bubble gently. Do not overcook.

Simple as that!

Generally, I would serve this with fried or boiled rice. Again, it's easy to cook your own rice but Ben's Rice in the pouch takes only 2 minutes in the microwave.

I've also served it with potato on the side.

Number of portions 3 Final Portion Size 300g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic tubs for individual portions.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from fresh are a guide only.

Micro (

Oven





Fryer



Cold

Plastic Tray
5 min

Plastic Tray 10 min

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot before serving.

Leave in plastic tray for microwave heating.

Transfer plastic tray contents to pot for stove top.

You may need to add a splash of water when reheating.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.





Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Bell Peppers
- Using a Sharp Knife

Slicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast slice into strips with a very sharp knife.

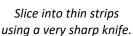
Transfer from the chopping board directly into the saucepan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put the chopping board, fork and knife right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.







Get the onions, peppers and garlic on to soften.

Cottage Pie (Beef)

Ingredients

- 1kg low-fat beef mince
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g frozen diced turnip
- 50g frozen peas
- 1 x powdered Cottage Pie Sauce
- 1 kg bag of white potato.

Options

 You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

• Get ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

• Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the mince. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the mince until all the little bits are brown and separated.

Cover with hot water and bring to a boil then simmer for 60 minutes.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip. Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and a splash of semi-skimmed milk. Mash until smooth and creamy.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the mince and vegetables are cooked, add the sauce and peas to the mince.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1¼ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See below for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Heating instructions are from chilled so must be amended for heating from frozen.

Micro

Oven

Stove



Fryer





Cold

30 min

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 30 minutes from thawed, or 60 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Browning Mince

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.



Farmer's Pie (Pork)

Ingredients

- 1kg Pork Mince
- 100g diced Frozen Onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 50g diced Frozen Turnip
- ½ Teaspoon Dried Thyme
- 1 x powdered Pork Casserole Sauce
- 1 kg bag of White Potato.

Options

 You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Tattie Masher
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

Get the ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the mince. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the mince until all the little bits are brown and separated.

Cover with hot water, add the thyme, and bring to a boil. Simmer for 60 minutes.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot, cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and a splash of milk. Mash until smooth and creamy.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the mince and vegetables are cooked, add the sauce to the mince.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Small Foil Storage Container

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 11/4 ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See overleaf for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions are from chilled so must be amended for heating from frozen.

Micro









Fryer



Cold

30 min

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 30 minutes from thawed, or 60 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- **Dicing and Slicing Onions**
- **Dicing and Slicing Potatoes**
- **Dicing and Slicing Carrots**
- **Browning Mince**

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.







Getting all the ingredients to hand



Browning the pork mince



Vegetables added and all cooked



Boxed up ready to add the mashed potato

Fillet Steak & Black Beans

Ingredients

- 340g Fillet Steak (2 medium)
- 100g onion
- 200g Sweet (Bell) Peppers
- 1 Clove Garlic
- 2 x 120g bags Blue Dragon Black Bean Sauce
- Knob of butter

Options

- Ok, ok, I know. We should make our own Black Bean Sauce – but it's lots of ingredients and a hassle. The Blue Dragon sauces are quick, easy and actually quite good!
- Can also be done with duck breast or chicken pieces.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Very Sharp Knife
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Take the steak out of the fridge and allow to rest at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes.
- Chunky dice the onion and peppers
- Fine dice the garlic
- Slice the steak with the very sharp knife

Note

This meal does not really fit the principles of Marion's Meals as it has a flavoured sauce and the fillet steak may be difficult to chew.

Method

Add a knob of butter or some vegetable oil to the saucepan and soften the onions for about 5 minutes.

Add the garlic and peppers and soften for a further 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, put another knob of butter in the second saucepan and add the fillet steak strips.

You might want to add a SMALL pinch of salt for cooking the steak. I don't - but I appreciate others have different tastes.

Remember the cooking sauce will be quite salty so take care not to add too much extra salt – if any!

Turn the steak a couple of times until browned on all sides. It will only take 4 or 5 minutes to cook sliced fillet steak.

Tip the softened vegetables into the steak pot.

Add the two packs of Black Bean Sauce and mix it all together.

Keep the pot on a low heat until the sauce starts to bubble gently. Do not overcook!

Simple as that!

Generally, I would serve this with fried or boiled rice. It's easy to cook your own rice but Ben's Rice in the pouch takes only 2 minutes to heat.



Number of portions 3

Final Portion Size 225 – 250g Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in plastic tubs for individual portions – without rice.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from fresh are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
Plastic Tray		Plastic Tray		
4 min		10 min		
Adjust times if heating from frozen.				

Be sure the meal is piping hot before serving.

Leave in plastic tray for microwave heating.

Transfer plastic tray contents to pot for stove top.

You may need to add a splash of water when reheating.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Bell Peppers
- Using a Sharp Knife



Let the steak rest before slicing.



Get the onions, peppers and garlic on to soften.



Start to slice into thin strips using a very sharp, large, knife.



All sliced ready to go in the pot.



Cook for 5 minutes until browned all over.



Boxed up ready for the freezer.

Fish Pie

Ingredients

- 250g Haddock
- 250g Smoked Haddock
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 50g Peas
- 1 powdered Parsley Sauce
- ½ Pint Semi-Skimmed Milk
- 1 litre Boiling Water
- Knob of butter
- 1Kg of potato

Options

- You can vary the fish option by using salmon or cod, rather than the smoked haddock.
- You can swap peas for sweetcorn, or do a halfand-half.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Measuring Jug
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Whisk

Preparation

- Get ingredients and equipment to hand
- Slice the fish into bite-size pieces about 1cm
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and slice the potato and get it on to boil

Method

Add a knob of butter to the large saucepan and add the diced fish and onion over a low to medium heat.

Use the spatula to keep it moving until the fish is cooked throughout and the onion is soft. Don't worry, it will not dry out when we do the rest of the cooking!



Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft. Check out the technique for making mashed potato.

Set the potato aside.

Empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add the milk. Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated.

Add the sauce to the fish & onion, bring to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Add the peas and return to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes.

Number of portions 4

Final Portion Size 200g Fish Mix

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 200g of fish to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1 ladle.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See Technique below for more information.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Defrost overnight in the fridge.

Micro

Oven

Stove

Fryer













30 Mins

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Remove the lid and place on a baking tray and pop in the oven at 180° .

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Making Mashed Potato

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the fish. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Haggis, Neeps & Tatties

Ingredients

- 500g Potato
- 1 tin Grants Haggis (392g)
- 375g Turnip
- 50g fine sliced onion
- 2 tsp Bisto
- Water for boiling potato & turnip
- 300ml water for gravy
- ½ tsp Mixed Herbs
- Knob of butter x 3
- Splash of Semi-Skimmed Milk

Options

- If you are going to eat this fresh, it's much nicer with a Creamy Pepper Sauce. This recipe uses a beef & onion gravy as it's better for freezing
- Rather than put the gravy over the food before freezing, you can freeze single portions of gravy in small plastic tubs. These can then be defrosted, reheated and applied to the food at the time of serving.

Equipment

- 2 large saucepans
- 1 medium saucepan
- 1 medium casserole dish
- Sharp knife
- Ice-Cream Scoop
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment ready.
- Get the potato and turnip diced
- Slice the onion

Method

Pop the potato in a large saucepan and cover with water. Add a little salt then bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes.

At the same time, pop the turnip in a large saucepan and cover with water. Add a little salt then bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes. You may need to add a bit more water as it simmers.

Once soft, drain then mash the potato with a knob of butter and a splash of milk. See the Techniques sheet for more details for making mashed potato.

Once soft, drain and mash the turnip with a knob of butter.

Allow the potato and turnip to cool.

Add the onions to the small saucepan, with a knob of butter. Lightly fry and soften them for 5 minutes.

Add the 300ml of water and the mixed herbs to the pot.

Mix the Bisto in a cup with a splash of water until there are no lumps.

Once the water comes to the boil, add the Bisto and simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove the top lid from the tin of haggis. Use the tin opener to cut the bottom from the tin and use this, in situ, to push the haggis into the casserole dish. Breakup the haggis with two forks.

Do not heat the haggis.



Number of portions 3 Final Portion Size 500g

Storage Container Large Plastic

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray for individual meals.

Add two balls of potato to one end of the box.

Add two balls of turnip to the centre section.

Add two spoons of haggis to the other end. Why use a spoon and not the scoop? The haggis is quite dense and may damage your ice-cream scoop!

Add the onion gravy to a small plastic tub for freezing.

You could pour a ladle of onion gravy over the top of it all in the box, but it makes for a very soggy meal when you reheat it. Not to my liking!

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from thawed are a guide only.

Micro

Oven

Stove





Fryer



Cold

5 min

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Best eaten from the tray.

If the gravy is in a separate tub, heat it in the microwave and once piping hot, pour it over the haggis, neeps & tatties.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

This recipe only requires one specific technique that is worth a mention.

- Slicing Potato
- Slicing and dicing Turnip
- Making Onion Gravy



Dicing the Turnip



Sliced Potato and Diced Turnip ready to cook



Fine slicing the onion



Onion gravy with the Bisto and Herbs



Two serving options.
- Gravy in a separate tub
Gravy included with the meal

Meatballs

Ingredients

- 24 Beef Meatballs
- 150g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 150g turnip
- 75g frozen peas
- 75g frozen sweetcorn
- 1 x powdered Beef Casserole Sauce

Options

- You can vary the vegetables
- The alternative, Peppered Beef Sauce, is excellent, but far too nippy for Marion's Meals!
- Instead of the Beef Casserole Sauce, this can also be made with the tomato and onion sauce from the bolognaise recipe.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Measuring Jug
- 1 Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Whisk

Preparation

Get ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 180°.

Get the kettle filled and boiled.

Place the meatballs on a baking tray and pop in the oven for 10 minutes, turning the meatballs part way through this time.



Transfer to a large pot and add enough boiling water to cover the meatballs. Probably 1.5 litres but it depends on the size of the pot.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip and make sure it's all covered with hot water.

Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are getting soft.

About 25 minutes into the simmer, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Add the sauce, the peas and the sweetcorn to the pot with the meatballs.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions 4

Final Portion Size 6 meatballs Storage Container Large Plastic

6 meatballs is quite a large potion for Marion and sometimes she will ask for this with 5, or even 4, meatballs.

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in large plastic containers for individual portions.

May be better in a 3-cell tray with potato and the peas and sweetcorn separate rather than in the mix.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			*	A TO

5 min 10 min
Adjust times if heating from frozen

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Can be served with Ben's rice or with a potato, carrot and turnip mash.

Not really suitable to eat directly from the tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots



Portioned with the beef casserole sauce. You'll need to heat potato to go with this.



Alternative with the tomato bolognaise sauce and fusilli but no good if you don't have a stove top to cook the pasta as there is no space in the plastic tub to freeze the pasta with the meatballs.

Mince & Tatties

Ingredients

- 1kg low-fat beef mince
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 50g frozen peas
- 2tsp Bisto
- 1 kg bag of white potato.
- Knob of butter and splash of semi-skimmed milk

Options

- Traditional recipe that has not changed for over the 50 years that I have cooked this. I'm not sure it needs options or changes!
- Add some suet dumplings but be aware that they can go a bit rubbery on the top when reheated in the microwave.
- You can use frozen, sliced carrot instead of fresh, diced carrot.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Ice Cream Scoop

Preparation

• Get the ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot.

Tattie Topping

• Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the mince. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the mince until all the little bits are brown and separated.

Cover with hot water and bring to a boil then simmer for 60 minutes.

Add the onion and carrot. Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and mash.

Set the potato aside.

Once the mince and vegetables are cooked, add the peas to the mince.

Add the Bisto to a cup with a splash of water. Mix until there are no lumps then add it to the pot.

Return to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.



Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil

Large Plastic

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers or large plastic tubs for individual portions.

Small Foil

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1¼ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See below for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Large Plastic

Add two scoops of potato to one end of the tray and a ladle of mince to the other end. It's ok this way, but the gravy tends to mix with the mash when you come to reheat.

3-Cell

Ladle the mince into the large cell.

Add two balls of mashed potato to one small cell.

Add a 50g mix of peas and sweetcorn.

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from fresh are a guide only.

Micro

Oven







Cold

Plastic Tray 5 min

Foil Tray 30 min

Plastic Tray 10 min

Adjust times if cooking from frozen.

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

Be sure the meal is piping hot before serving.

Leave in plastic tray for microwave heating or transfer plastic tray contents to pot for stove top.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Browning Mince

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Freeze in a foil tray or a plastic tray.



Nearing the end of the cooking process



Also freeze on its own in a plastic tub as it works well with a baked potato

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Pork Casserole

Ingredients

- 600g Diced Pork (If you can't get diced pork, then three pork loins can be diced at home)
- 150g Chunky Onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g Peas
- 1 x powdered Pork Casserole Sauce
- 1 kg bag of White Potato.

Options

 You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

• Get the ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Cut the onion into chunks. Although it is much easier to use frozen onion, frozen chunky onion is hard to find. You could use diced onion though.
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the diced pork. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the cubes until browned.

Cover with hot water and add the vegetables. Don't add the peas at this time.

Bring to a boil then simmer for 60 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and mash.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the pork and vegetables are cooked, add the Sauce and peas to the pot.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes



131

Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 200g Meat Mix

150g Potato

Small Foil Storage Container

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 200g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1¼ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See below for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Heating instructions are from chilled are a guide and must be amended for heating from frozen.

Micro

Oven

Stove







Cold

30 min

Pre-heat the oven to 190° , gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 30 minutes from chilled, or 60 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- **Dicing and Slicing Onions**
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- **Dicing and Slicing Carrots**
- Dicing Meat such as Beef or Pork

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Get the ingredients ready. I've dropped the red cabbage from the recipe but need a new photograph!



Browning the pork prior to adding the water and vegetables

"Roast" Beef - Slow Cooked

Introduction

This is so simple it doesn't really need a recipe card – apart from the fact it's a good reminder to try this from time to time!

Ingredients

- 1 Kg of Silverside or other similar "Roasting Joint"
- 1 cup of cold water
- A wee pinch of salt
- 2 tsp of Bisto
- 200g peas) Optional
- 200g sweetcorn Optional
- 1kg Potato Optional

Options

 You can portion this into on its own in a plastic tray, or in a 3-cell for a self-contained meal.

Equipment

- Slow Cooker
- Cup
- Saucepan
- Kitchen Scissors

Preparation

Wash the beef under a cold running tap. Leave it in the string or "net" if it has one.



Getting ready to switch on the slow cooker

Method

Place the beef joint in the slow cooker "fat side down" and set to "Auto". It's fair to argue that this is upside down. You make your choice! This way stops the bottom from over cooking and crumbling, but you lose some benefit from the fat juices not running through the beef as it cooks.

Leave to cook for a minimum of 7 hours, but I tend to leave for 8 so it is more tender. If you leave it too long, the beef becomes so tender it crumbles rather than slices when you try to cut it.

If serving right away: Once cooked, transfer the beef to a warmed plate and cover with foil for a couple of minutes so you can make the gravy.

Mix the bisto in a cup of cold water until it is smooth.

Tip the liquid from the slow cooker into a saucepan and add bisto. Bring to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes. Hey Presto – a simple gravy with the stock from the beef.

Use kitchen scissors to remove the string or net from the beef before slicing.

Use a very sharp knife for slicing but be sure to keep your fingers well clear of the blade!

When serving fresh, you can use whatever veg you want. I like roast potato, cauliflower cheese, peas and Yorkshire pudding. Check out their recipes if you are not sure what to do.

It also stores well for freezing. See overleaf for details.

Number of portions 4 - 5

Final Portion Size 100g Meat

(2 – 3 slices) 125g Potato 100g Veg

Storage Container Small Foil Tray,

or 3-Cell Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions of beef so you can serve your choice of tattie and veg.

Alternatively, it can be packaged in a 3-cell tray with the tattie and veg in the other cells.

Either way, cover the beef with the gravy before freezing.

3-Cell trays work well with boiled potatoes but are best with mashed potato. Roast potatoes lose their crunch and can become quite rubbery!

Put a knob of butter in the potato and veg cells.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Plastic trays

- only suitable for microwave heating.
- 4 5 minutes on max power from chilled
- A couple of minutes longer from frozen

Foil trays

- only suitable for oven heating.
- Pre-heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.
- Leave the lid on and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 20 minutes from thawed, or 40 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot before serving.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Par-boiling Potatoes for Freezing
- Using a Sharp Knife.
 Don't assume you can use a blunt knife it simply rips the joint to the consistency of



pulled-pork!

Beef as it comes out the slow cooker



Cooking juices that will be the basis of the gravy



Slicing the beef.
Start of the crumbly
bottom from slight overcooking (but very tender)



Portioned ready for freezing then re-heating in the microwave

Sausage Casserole

Ingredients

- 667g Thick Pork Sausages
- 200g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g Diced Turnip
- 2 x powdered Sausage Casserole Sauce
- 1 litre + 550ml Water
- Knob of butter
- 1.25Kg of potato
- 125g Peas
- 125g Sweetcorn

Options

• You can vary the vegetables

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Measuring Jug
- Baking Tray
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Whisk

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Pre-Heat the oven to 180°
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip
- Peel and slice the potato and get it on to boil

You may find the notes for preparing mashed potato useful.

Method

Line your baking tray with tinfoil.

Spread out the sausages so they do not touch each other.

Place in the centre of the oven for 10 minutes.

Add the onions to the saucepan with a small knob of butter or sunflower oil and soften for 5 minutes or so.

Turn the sausages and cook for a further 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, add the water, carrot and turnip to the pot. Bring to the boil and simmer.

Turn the sausages and cook for a final 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, add another 500ml of water to the pot and return to the boil.

Once the sausages are cooked (30 minutes in total) carefully add them to the saucepan.

Empty the sauce packets into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Add the sauce to the saucepan then return to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.



Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 4 Sausages

200g Potato

Storage Container 3-Cell

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in 3-cell containers for individual portions.

Add 4 sausages to the large cell and top up with the gravy mix.

Add three balls of the potato mash to a small cell.

Add the mix of peas and sweetcorn to the third cell – adding a knob of butter.

This is a large potion so you may want to consider 3 sausages and only 2 scoops of potato as a lighter alternative.

I now serve the smaller portion of 3 sausages.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for conventional or stove-top heating.

Micro









Stove





Cold

6 min

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Loosen the lid and place in the microwave.

Use a fork to mix up the potato and veg once heating is complete.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Best if eaten directly from the tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- **Dicing and Slicing Onions**
- **Making Mashed Potato**
- **Dicing and Slicing Carrots**

Note that this recipe depends on the size and quality on the sausage. Don't cheapskate on them!













Sausage & Potato Pie

Ingredients

- 600g Pork Link Sausages
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 100g Diced Turnip
- 1 powdered Sausage Casserole Sauce
- 1 litre Boiling Water
- Knob of butter
- 1Kg of potato
- 50g Peas

Options

- You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip
- Can be made with diced lorne sausage instead of link sausage.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Measuring Jug
- Baking Tray
- Large Saucepan
- Spatula
- Whisk

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Slice the sausage into bite-size pieces
- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip
- Peel and slice the potato and get it on to boil

You may find the notes for preparing mashed potato useful.

Method

Add a knob of butter to the large saucepan and add the diced sausage over a medium heat.

Use the spatula to keep them moving until the sausage is browned on all sides.

Add the onion and continue to stir until the onion is softened – approximately another 5 minutes.

Add the boiling water, carrot and turnip to the pot. Return to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Do not add the peas at this stage.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft. Check out the technique for making mashed potato.

Set the potato aside.

Empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Add the sauce and the peas to the saucepan then return to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions

Final Portion Size 225g Sausage

140g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of sausage & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1¼ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See Technique below for more information.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Micro









Fryer



Cold

Adjust times if heating from frozen.

Remove the lid and place on a baking tray and pop in the oven at 180°.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- **Dicing and Slicing Onions**
- **Making Mashed Potato**
- **Dicing and Slicing Carrots**

Note that this recipe depends on the quality on the sausage. Don't cheapskate on them!

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Shepherd's Pie (Lamb)

Ingredients

- 1kg lamb mince
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 50g frozen diced turnip
- 50g frozen peas
- 1 x powdered Shepherd's Pie Sauce
- 1 kg bag of white potato.

Options

- You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip
- Take a look at the Shepherd's Pie (Turkey) recipe as a healthier alternative.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

· Get the ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

• Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown the lamb mince. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the mince until all the little bits are brown and separated.

Cover with hot water and bring to a boil then simmer for 60 minutes.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip. Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and mash.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the mince and vegetables are cooked, add the sauce and peas to the mince.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1½ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See overleaf for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Not Suitable for microwave or stove-top heating.

Heating instructions are from chilled so must be amended for heating from frozen.

Micro

Oven

Stove





Fryer



Cold

30 min

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray. Heat for 30 minutes from thawed, or 60 minutes from frozen.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Browning Mince

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.





Shepherd's Pie (Turkey)

Ingredients

- 750g Turkey Mince
- 100g diced frozen onion
- 150g diced carrot (2 medium)
- 50g frozen diced turnip
- 100g frozen peas
- 1 x powdered Shepherd's Pie Sauce
- 1 kg bag of white potato (gives about 850g of mashed potato).

Options

- You can vary the vegetables such as substitute sweetcorn for the turnip
- This is very similar to the lamb version of Shepherd's Pie, but with less fat, different ingredients and a shorter cooking time.

Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Potato Peeler
- Measuring Jug
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Spatula
- Whisk
- Optional Ice-cream Scooper
- Two forks

Preparation

Get the ingredients and equipment to hand

Vegetables

- Dice the onion, but it is much easier to use frozen diced onion
- Peel and dice the carrot & turnip

Tattie Topping

• Peel, slice and wash the Potato

Slicing the potato makes it cook quicker and that's fine as we are going to mash the potato.

Method

Brown turkey the mince. Start by adding it to the saucepan on a medium heat with a small splash of oil. Keep stirring and working the mince until all the little bits are brown and separated.

Add the onion, carrot and turnip. Don't add the peas at this time.

Return to a boil then simmer for 30 minutes.

You may need to top-up with water but only just enough to cover the ingredients. You do not want too much water remaining after the cooking is done.

Meanwhile, pop the sliced potato in another pot and cover with water and add a little salt.

Boil the potato until soft.

Drain thoroughly and return the potato pot to a very low heat to work off any remaining water. Use the spatula to keep the tattie moving so it does not stick. This should only take a couple of minutes. Once dry, add a decent knob of butter (or two!) and mash.

Set the potato aside.

As the meat cooking process nears the end, empty the sauce packet into a measuring jug and add a little water. Ignore the instructions on the packet! Give it a good mix with a whisk or fork, until the powder is incorporated into a loose paste.

Once the mince and vegetables are cooked, add the sauce and peas to the mince.

Return to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes.

Number of portions 5

Final Portion Size 225g Meat

150g Potato

Storage Container Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in small foil containers for individual portions.

Add 225g of meat & veg to the bottom of a small foil tray. This is about 1½ ladles.

Gently press the mix to the corners and the bottom of the tray and top with the mashed potato. See below for technique.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from fresh are a guide only.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

30 min
Adjust times if cooking from frozen.

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

To serve on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the foil tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Dicing and Slicing Carrots
- Browning Mince

Topping With Mashed Potato

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it over the meat. Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.



Note that my ice-cream scoop creates balls of mashed potato that are about 70g.

Your scoop may differ!

You may have a little mashed potato left over but that depends on the quality of the potato and the thickness of your peel!

If you have extra, you can use it later to make tattie scones, or stick it in a plastic tub for freezing.

St David's Chicken

Introduction

This is a simplified version of a chicken dish that is easy to make but with a wee bit extra flavour. This recipe does not stray far from the traditional versions.

Ingredients

- 600g Diced Chicken 2 or 3 Medium Breasts
- 50g diced onion
- 100g 1 small leek
- 3 slices of smoked back bacon OR –
 1 small pack (200g) of pancetta
- 2 dessert spoons of clear honey
- Knorr Chicken Stock Cube (1)
- A splash of rapeseed or sunflower Oil
- 2 teaspoons cornflour
- 500ml water
- 75g Sweetcorn
- 75g Peas
- 650g Potato

Options

- You have a choice of container for freezing and whether you want to freeze with sides of potato and vegetables.
- You can use smoked back bacon or pancetta.
- You can decorate the dish with sliced spring onion or parsley as you are serving.
- When eating fresh from cooking this goes very well with Ben's Egg Fried Rice.

Equipment

- Big pot
- Pair of kitchen scissors
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

- Get the ingredients and equipment to hand
- Dice the onion although it is much easier to use frozen onion.

Method

Add a splash of rapeseed or sunflower oil to the bottom of the pan and heat gently.

If you are using chicken breasts, use a fork to hold the chicken and the scissors to cut the chicken right into the pot. Do not wash the chicken.

Keep turning the chicken for about 10 minutes until sealed on all sides. If you leave it for more than 10 minutes, the chicken will be nearly fully cooked but that's ok as it will keep moist and will have plenty sauce.

Tip: Cheap chicken gives off a lot of water and white gunk so you might want to pour off some of that liquid.

Add the onion, bacon and leek and keep them moving in the pot until softened.

Cover with water and add the chicken stock.

Bring to the boil and simmer for a further 10 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked.

Optionally, you can add cornflour now and this will make the gravy a little bit thicker with a whiteish tinge to it.

Allow to simmer for a further 5 minutes.

Add the honey and simmer for a further 2 minutes.



Number of portions	3	4
Final Portion Size	300g	225g
Storage Container	3-Cell	Small Foil

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in 3-cell containers or foil trays with mash topping for individual portions.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions from chilled are a guide only.

Micro	Oven	Stove	Fryer	Cold
			4	
6 mins	30 min			,
3-Cell	Foil Tray			
Adjust times if cooking from frozen.				

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout.

3-Cell Tray

Loosen the lid and pop in the microwave on full power for the time indicated.

This is best consumed directly from the tray.

Foil Tray

Pre-heat the oven to 190°, gas mark 5.

Remove the paper lid and place the foil container on a baking tray.

To serve the foil version on a pre-heated plate, fold back the sides of the foil tray and transfer the meal to the plate with a fish slice.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potatoes
- Topping dish with Mashed Potato
- Using a 3-Cell Container
- Dicing and Slicing Chicken

Dicing Chicken

Use a fork to hold the chicken breast over the pot and cut into rough chunks with the kitchen scissors, directly into the pan.

Safety Tip

Reduce the Risk of Cross-Contamination & Food Poisoning

Do not wash the chicken.
Put the fork and scissors right into the dishwasher or a basin of hot water.
Wash your hands.

Adding Cornflour to Dishes

Mix the cornflour in a cup with a splash of cold water until there are no lumps before adding to the pot.

Allow to simmer for a couple of minutes to get the full effect of the cornflour.





Stovies

Ingredients

- 1kg potato
- 150g A bowl of frozen diced onion
- 450g (6 slices) of Lorne Sausage
- 1 Knorr Ham Stock Cube

Quantities are just a guide as the exact numbers don't matter. One slice of lorne sausage goes a long way in a pot of stovies!

Options

 Instead of sausage, you could try using things such as corned beef, mince or even the off cuts from the Sunday roast!

Equipment

- Big pot
- Decent tattie peeler
- Sharp Knife
- Basic utensils nothing special!

Preparation

Peel the tatties and dice them. You want a mix of very small to fairly big in size.

The small ones break down sooner and add to the essential "gloop" of Stovies while the bigger ones break down a bit, but mostly just to take the edges off the pieces.

Dice the onion - although it is much easier to use frozen onion.

Dice the sausage.





Method

Add the potato, sausage, onion and stock cube to your big pot and barely cover with water.

Some will tell you to brown the sausage first, but I don't bother now - and it works fine for me without.

Bring to the boil and start the simmer.



Keep an eye on this. If it's not enough water, the potato will not cook properly, but if it's too much water, it will never get the thick consistency that we aim for.

Simmer for 45 minutes to an hour.

Taste and season. If you think you need more salt, add another stock cube instead!

Now is the critical part!

Keep an eye on this, stirring often to stop the mix sticking to the bottom of the pot.

Keep simmering and stirring until almost all the water is absorbed or boiled away.

This could be as much as another hour or so on a very low heat!



There should be no clear liquid at the end – just the white gloopy texture of Stovies.

But, it burns easy so don't take your eye of this for a minute!

Once it has cooled, it gets even thicker (see photo overleaf!)

Number of portions 6 Final Portion Size 225g Storage Container Plastic Tray

Storage

This can be served fresh but also ideal for freezing in a plastic tray for individual meals.

Allow to cool before freezing

Heating & Serving

Heating instructions are a guide only

Be sure the meal is piping hot throughout before serving.

Micro Oven Stove Fryer Cold

5 min 20 min

If reheating from frozen, increase heating times.

Preferably defrosted overnight before heating.

Add a splash of water to the tray before heating.

Can be eaten directly from the tray.

Reheating Stovies

Stovies are good for freezing but you need to add a bit of water to the mix before heating.

Dry mix does not conduct heat very well and you get a mix of burnt spots and cold spots if you don't add the water.

Once defrosted, consume within 24 hours.

Do not refreeze.

Techniques & Principles

Some of the basic techniques and principles are detailed elsewhere as, once you know them, you will have little need to refer back to them.

It reduces the clutter in the recipe sheet!

- Dicing and Slicing Onions
- Dicing and Slicing Potato



Bulk Cooking Stovies

Adding water before reheating is particularly important if you've made a huge pot in advance for a party. Add plenty water and make sure it gets to the bottom of the pan by digging through the mix with a spatula.



The recipe scales very easily but the largest batch I have cooked in a single pot is 40 portions. After that, I was concerned that the pot contents would be too heavy, causing them to stick and burn.

It was safer to cook 100 portions over 3 pots.

You can keep the stovies warm and serve from a soup kettle or bain-marie.

Tips

Don't go cheapskate on the stock cube. It has to be Knorr Ham Cube to get the authentic flavour that we were brought up on!



Cakes & Biscuits

Biscuits	149
Cup (Fairy) Cakes	151
Fruit Loaf	153
Lemon Drizzle Cake	155
Mars Bar No-Bake Tray Bake	157
Melting Moments	159
Muffins	161
Raisin & Nut Crumble Slice	163

Biscuits

Ingredients		
	Oz	Grams
Lightly Salted Butter	4 oz	113g
Icing Sugar	1 oz	28g
Caster Sugar	½ oz	14g
Self Raising Flour	4 oz	113g
Cornflour	2 oz	57g
Original recipe in Ounces		

Options

- There's not much you can do with these other than
 - add a filling such as Chocolate Chips, coconut, chopped nuts etc.
 - o decorate with icing sugar and toppings
- Add ½ teaspoon of vanilla extract for additional flavour.

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- 2 flat baking trays
- Spatula (to lift the biscuits off the tray
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

• Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, Gas mark 5

Grease 2 baking trays with melted butter.

Cream the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.

Sieve the flour and cornflour into the bowl and mix to a stiff dough.

Roll out to about ¼ inch thick and use a 2-inch, medium, cookie cutter to get circles of dough.

You can gather the leftovers of dough to roll and cut more biscuits.

Place apart on the baking tray and pop in the oven for about 10 to 12 minutes, or until light-golden brown.

It's also ok to make them larger but remember to adjust the cooking time.

Allow to sit in the baking tray for a couple of minutes before transferring to a wire rack for cooling.

Once cooled they can be decorated with icing sugar and a toping such as a jelly sweet, half-cherry or 100s & 1000s.

Take a look at the baking aisle in your supermarket for other topping ideas.

This recipe makes 12 - 15 biscuits.

Storing

Can be stored in a metal biscuit tin, or in an airtight container.

They are meant for eating within a day or so as they can go soft quite quickly.

Do not refrigerate.

Techniques

There are no special techniques. This is a good recipe to get the children involved.

Cup (Fairy) Cakes

Ingredients

- 170g Self Raising Flour
- 170g Butter (Preferably unsalted)
- 170g Caster Sugar for cake mix
- 3 Large Eggs
- 1tsp Baking Powder
- Tablespoon of Milk
- ½ tsp Vanilla Extract

See Techniques on the web for the ingredients to make frosting and butter icing.

Options

Not much to say here – this is a classic recipe for a classic cake!

This simple sponge recipe is the basis of many types of cake and can easily be personalised to your own tastes and design.

This is a simple sponge cup cake.

You can make half quantity by using 2 medium eggs.

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- 2 Cup Cake Tins & 24 Paper Cases
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

- Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.
- Get the paper cases in the cupcake baking tray.

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.

Cream the caster sugar and butter. That's just a bakers' way of saying beat the butter and sugar with your electric whisk until the sugar is incorporated and the butter is smooth.

This is best done with butter that is a bit soft. It does not work at all with rock-hard butter right from the fridge!

Add the eggs one at a time with a little flour and incorporate that before adding the next egg.

Tip: Break the eggs into a cup before adding to the mix just in case you get a bit of shell in the mix, or the egg is bad!

Use the sieve to add the remaining flour and mix.

Add the vanilla extract and milk and gently mix in.

Fill each cake case with the batter.

Put in the oven for 35 minutes.

Do not be tempted to open the oven during cooking – the cakes will collapse.

Insert a skewer into a cake in the middle row and it will come out clean when the cakes are ready. You might need to bake for a further 5 minutes or so but take note of this for the next time, so you don't have to return the tray to the oven.

That's the basic sponges – fine as they are but so easy to get creative and decorate them.

Suggestions for Decorating

- Simple icing sugar (frosting to our USA friends) and sprinkles or other toppings from the baking aisle at the supermarket.
- Butter Icing and a chance to get creative with an icing bag!
- Strawberry butter icing with a strawberry on top.
- Chocolate butter icing with grated chocolate

18 - 24 cakes, but it does depend on the size of the cake cases you use.

Storage

Store in an airtight container for up to 2 or 3 days.

Will keep for a few days.

Do not refrigerate

Tips

Cup cakes are very easy to make, but they are also easy to get wrong!

Test Kitchen

I have tested this by baking cakes dozens of times with slight variations to test the sensitivity of the instructions. This is explained in more detail on the website, www.marionsmeals.com

In summary:

- Use cake cases that fit the cake tin for size and shape
- Fill the cake case to the top with the cake batter
- Do not open the oven part-way through baking
- Do not add too much water to the frosting
- Do not add too much hot water to the butter icing



Test: Different amounts of batter in the cake case.

Not enough cake batter results in cakes that do not rise properly

Techniques

The main techniques are

- Making Butter Icing for Cup Cakes
- Making Frosting for Cup Cakes
- Making Butterfly Cakes
- Using your imagination for different ways to decorate your Cup Cakes

The techniques are available on the web at www.marionsmeals.com



Getting the ingredients ready



Break the egg into a cup before adding to the batter



It takes very little water to convert icing sugar into frosting



Examples of decorating cup cakes

Fruit Loaf

This was one of Wendy's classics that I adopted decades ago. It's so simple to make, I've even made this in the middle of a field with a camp oven!

Ingredients

- ½ Cup White Sugar
- ½ Cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Cup Sultanas
- 1 Cup Milk
- 3oz Butter
- 1 tsp Treacle
- 2 Cups Self Raising Flour
- 1 Egg

Options

Not much to say here – this is a classic recipe for a classic fruit loaf!

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Large Saucepan
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- Measuring Jug
- 1lb Loaf Tin
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

- Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.
- Grease and flour the loaf tin (see Techniques)

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.

Melt the sugars, butter, milk and sultanas in the saucepan.

Bring to a soft boil and add the treacle.

Take off the heat for a few minutes to start to cool. Do not over-heat the sugars.

Add the flour is stages and mix it in.

Once the flour is incorporated, add the egg.

Put the mix in the greased and floured loaf tin.

Put in the oven for 1 hour.

Allow to cool in the tin for 10 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack,



This recipe makes a standard loaf that is best cut a bit on the thick side. You can get 8 thick slices or maybe 10 or more thin slices.

The end pieces are often fought after!

Some folks like this "as-is", where others insist on a scraping of butter for serving.

Your choice!

Storage

Store in an airtight plastic box.

Will keep for a few days.

Do not refrigerate

Techniques

There are no special techniques for this recipe other than:

Grease and Flour a Loaf Tin



Getting the ingredients ready



Grease and flour the loaf tin



Get the wet ingredients started



Add the sugars and bring to a soft boil



You should have a moist mix that you can pour into the loaf tin



Be patient — let it cool before you cut into it! Expect a fight over the crusty bits and the end pieces!

Lemon Drizzle Cake

Introduction

This is the recipe I adopted and adapted years ago, and I still think it's a nice simple recipe that does not require any special expertise.

However, let's not kid ourselves. The Lemon Drizzle Cake Mix from the supermarket is just as nice, it's cheaper and it's easier to make.

If you are not a regular baker or you are attempting a loaf for the first time, the bought mix is a great place to start.

Ingredients

- 170g Self Raising Flour
- 170g Butter (Preferably unsalted)
- 170g Caster Sugar for cake mix
- 85g Caster Sugar for the drizzle
- 3 Eggs
- 1tsp Baking Powder
- Tablespoon of Milk
- 1 Lemon for zesting, and getting about 50ml of lemon juice (you only need about 40ml)

Options

Not much to say here – this is a classic recipe for a classic cake!

You can use Lemon Extract if you don't have a lemon. You will get the flavour but not the visual and texture benefits of zest in the cake.

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- 1lb Loaf Tin
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

- Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.
- Grease and flour the loaf tin (see Techniques)

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, gas mark 5.

Remove the zest of the lemon into a bowl.

Juice the lemon.

Mix the sugar and butter to a cream.

This is best done with butter that is a bit soft. It does not work at all with rock-hard butter!

Add the baking powder to the flour.

Add the eggs one at a time with a little flour and incorporate that before adding the next egg.

Tip: Break the eggs into a cup before adding to the mix just in case you get a bit of shell in the mix, or the egg is bad!

Use the sieve to add the remaining flour and mix.

Add the milk and lemon zest and gently mix in.

Put the mix in the greased and floured loaf tin.

Put in the oven for 45 minutes. Do not be tempted to open the oven – the loaf will collapse.

Whilst you are waiting, make the drizzle by adding the lemon juice in stages to the caster sugar until you get the consistency you want. It should "pour" but not run like milk!

Insert a skewer into the loaf and it will come out clean when the loaf is ready.

Leave the loaf in the tin and transfer the tin to a cooling rack.

Use a fork to prick the top of the loaf. Give the fork a little wiggle to make small, but deep, holes.

Pour the drizzle over the cake. Some will soak into the holes you have made; the rest will form crunchy strands of drizzle over the cake.

Now you know why we leave the loaf in the tin – it stops the drizzle running over the edges!

Do not remove from the tin until the cake is completely cold and the drizzle has "set".

This recipe makes a standard sponge that is best cut a bit on the thick side. You can get 8 thick slices or maybe 10 or more thin slices.

Storage

Store in an airtight container for up to 2 or 3 days.

I wrap individual slices lightly in tinfoil so I can send them to Marion with the meals.

Will keep for a few days.

Do not refrigerate



Crack each egg into a cup before adding to the mix one at a time.



All ingredients in the bowl and mixed. Don't over beat as you want to keep the mix smooth and airy.



Making the Drizzle

little at a time?

Add the lemon juice to the caster sugar a

The Drizzle is Ready You might not need all the lemon juice so add it a little at a time.

Techniques

There are no special techniques for this recipe other than zesting and juicing a lemon.



My old method remove the sponge for cooling and adding the drizzle. What a mess! Now I leave it in the tin.



Fight for the end piece?



A light and fluffy sponge with a subtle taste on lemon throughout.

Mars Bar No-Bake Tray Bake

Ingredients

- 200g Mars Bars (5 small ones)
- 50g Butter plus a knob of extra butter
- 1 dessert spoon Golden Syrup
- 100g Rice Krispies
- 100g Cooking Chocolate
- Teaspoon of Orange Extract

Options

- Top with dark chocolate instead of the traditional milk chocolate.
- Use mint extract rather than the orange.
- Add a handful of raisins and/or nuts to the mix

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- 2 Large Saucepans
- Baking tray int size approx. 270 x 170 x 35mm
- 2 Spatulas
- Dessert Spoon
- Greaseproof Paper

Preparation

- Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.
- Line the baking tray
- Dice the mars bar
- Don't skip the syrup otherwise you get a jaw-breaking concrete biscuit!





Method

Line the baking tray with the greaseproof paper.

Cut the Mars Bars into 1cm cubes (or thereabouts!) The smaller the pieces, the quicker they melt!

Add the Mars Bars, Butter and Syrup to a saucepan and place over a low heat, keeping the mix moving with a spatula, until melted. Be patient – it will take a bit of time to melt but if you use too much heat it will stick or burn. I prefer to melt the butter and syrup before adding the Mars Bars as it reduces the chance of it sticking.

Be sure it is all melted and quite smooth. You should be able to move the mix with the spatula without too much effort and no lumps.

Once melted, remove from the heat and gently fold in half the Krispies. Once they are covered, add the rest of the Krispies and fold them in until all are completely coated. You have only a few minutes to do this, and the next step, as the mix cools quickly and goes quite stiff.

Transfer the mix to the lined baking tray and spread the mix flat, right into the corners and right to the edges. Using the back of a spoon, press the mix firmly to get a level top and to make sure there are no huge gaps – but don't get too violent with it!

Set this aside to cool.

Whilst the tray is cooling, melt the chocolate and add the extract.

Spread it over the tray bake with a spatula.

Let the chocolate set before removing from the tray.

Set on a cutting board and use a large knife (and some effort) to cut into portions.

This recipe makes 24 decent-sized bars.

Storage

Store in an airtight plastic box.

Will keep for a few days, but who stores this for the long term!?

Do not refrigerate



Dicing the Mars Bar



Melting the Ingredients



Krispies Mixed In



Chocolate Topping

Techniques

Lining a baking tray

Melt a knob of butter and grease the base of the baking tray. Line the baking tray with greaseproof paper, folding it right in to the corners.

As the butter hardens, it helps the paper stay in place.

Melting Chocolate

Break the chocolate into the mixing bowl.

Place the bowl over a pan of simmering water until the chocolate melts.

Lightly stir with a spatula & add the extract.

Never melt chocolate in a pan on direct heat.

Never – Ever – Ever - get water in the chocolate – not even the smallest drop!

Melting Moments

Ingredients

- 5 oz Soft Lightly Salted Butter
- 3 oz Caster Sugar
- 5 oz Self Raising Flour
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1 cup porridge oats

Options

- Dark Chocolate Chips
- Milk Chocolate Chips
- Desiccated Coconut
- Raisins
- Golden Syrup

Traditional Melting Moments are rolled in the oats and have no other options – other than a cherry on the top. I like to mix in the oats and sometimes add an extra filling.

You create your own variations from the list above, or anything else that you can think of. I've never tried adding chopped nuts but that sounds like a good idea as well!

The Golden Syrup gives a chewy biscuit rather than a crisp biscuit and works well with raisins.

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- 2 flat baking trays
- 2 teaspoons
- Spatula (to lift the biscuits off the tray
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

• Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, Gas mark 5

Grease 2 baking trays with melted butter.

Cream the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.

Mix in the vanilla extract.

Sieve the flower into the bowl and mix well

I choose to add the oats and mix evenly at this stage, but you can keep them for coating the biscuits (traditional method).

Now add your optional ingredients.

Using two teaspoons, mould the mixture into small balls and space out on the baking tray.

It's also ok to make them larger but remember to adjust the cooking time.

Press them gently on the top to start the flattening process.

Note that they will flatten and spread significantly when they are cooking.

Bake for 10 – 12 minutes until light, golden, brown.

Allow to sit in the baking tray for a couple of minutes before transferring to a wire rack for cooling.

Tips

Can also be cooked in a "tray bake" style and cut into biscuits with a pizza cutter before transferring to the wire tray. If using this method, line the baking tray with greaseproof paper.

Note: You can use vanilla essence instead of extract if that's all you have – that would be 2 teaspoons though!

Portions

This recipe makes 12 - 15 biscuits.

Storing

Can be stored in a metal biscuit tin, or in airtight plastic tubs.

They are meant for eating within a day or so as they can go soft quite quickly.

Do not refrigerate.

Techniques

There are no special techniques if you are making individual biscuits. A good one to get the children involved.

If you are making a tray of biscuits to be cut after cooking, check out:

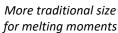
Lining a Baking Tray





8 Jumbo Biscuits







Cooked "tray-bake" style and cut before transferring to the wire rack

Muffins

Ingredients

- 2 Medium Eggs
- 125ml Vegetable Oil
- 250ml Semi-Skimmed Milk
- 250g Golden Caster Sugar
- 400g Self Raising Flour
- 1 tsp Salt

Options

- 100g washed blueberries
- 75g Dark Chocolate Chips
- 75g Milk Chocolate Chips
- 50g Raisins

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer, but I find it easier to mix with a fork or whisk.
- Sieve
- Measuring Jug
- 2 x Muffin tray
- 12 Muffin Cases Larger than fairy cake cases
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

- Get all the ingredients measured and equipment laid out.
- Get the paper cases in the muffin tray



Method

Heat the oven to 200°, gas mark 6.

Break the eggs into a mixing bowl and lightly mix with a fork or the mixer.

Add vegetable oil and milk and whisk until just combined.

Add the caster sugar and mix until smooth.

Sift in the flour and salt, again until just smooth. Do not over mix – it's ruins the texture of the muffin!

You have the option here to split the mix into two bowls so you can make 6 each of two variants. I like to do this to get 6 Blueberry and 6 Choc Chip.

Fold in the blueberries or choc chips.

Spoon into the muffin cases (just over ¾ full).

Bake for 25 minutes until risen and golden brown.

Stick a skewer in if you are not sure that they are cooked. The skewer should come out clean.

Once removed from the oven, leave them in the tray for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack for cooling.

Obviously, keep them in the paper muffin case until you are ready to eat them!

They will keep moist for a good few days but if they are not to be eaten within day or so, you can extend their storage time if you transfer them to individual plastic bags with a folded square of kitchen roll in the bottom.



This recipe makes 12 large muffins.

Storage

Store in an airtight plastic box.

Will keep for a few days.

Do not refrigerate



Get all the ingredients to hand and measured before you start.



Part Cooked and Starting to Rise Be patient and do not open the oven door during cooking.



Large muffins cooling.

Oops, I left them in the oven 5 minutes longer than I intended.

Maybe a bit darker than usual, but still light and fluffy inside.



Ready to Eat
Light, Fluffy & Moist
but they will dry out
over the next few
days.

Techniques

There are no special techniques for this recipe. A good one to get the children involved.

If you want your muffins to rise over the edge of the paper case, you really need to use a proper muffin tray – deeper than the fairy cake tray.

If you are using two different fillings in the same muffin, use half the quantity of each one.

Test Kitchen

Big Muffins or Small Muffins?

I ran an experiment with two sizes of Muffins.

In both tests, I used a deep muffin tray and filled the cases to near the top. It's important that the cake case is a good fit to the tray.





Small muffins have the same great taste, but the crispy outside tends to dominate the light inside.

The smaller muffins also did not have as much of the filler, in this example, choc-chips.

The larger muffins are the more traditional style. They stored better as the small ones dried out much quicker. Not good for muffins that are already designed to be quite dry inside.





Overall, I'll stick to the large muffin option. If I want small sponges, I'll use the Cup Cake recipe.

Raisin & Nut Crumble Slice

Ingredients

- 5 oz Soft Lightly Salted Butter
- 3 oz Caster Sugar
- 5 oz Self Raising Flour
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- ¾ Cup of Raisins (3 oz)
- ¼ Cup of Mixed Chopped Nuts (1 ½ oz)

Options

- Dark Chocolate Chips
- Milk Chocolate Chips
- Desiccated Coconut
- Golden Syrup

This is a standard biscuit recipe to which you can adapt to suit. You create your own variations from the list above, or anything else that you can think of.

The Golden Syrup gives a chewy biscuit rather than a crisp biscuit.

Equipment

- Kitchen Scales
- Mixing Bowl
- Food Mixer
- Sieve
- Baking trays
- Spatula (to lift the biscuits off the tray
- Wire rack for cooling

Preparation

• Get all the ingredients measured and laid out.

Method

Heat the oven to 180°, Gas mark 5

Line the baking tray with greaseproof paper (See Techniques).

Cream the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy

Mix in the vanilla extract

Sieve the flower into the bowl and mix well

Add the raisins and nuts and fold into the mix.

Transfer to the baking tray and gently push the mix to the corners and until you get a flat(ish) layer of mix.

Note that the mix will flatten and spread significantly when cooking before it starts to rise.

Bake for 15 minutes until light, golden, brown.

Allow to sit in the baking tray for 5 minutes before transferring (on the paper) to a wire rack for further cooling for another 5 minutes.

Once cool, remove from the paper and cut into biscuit slices. Allow to cool properly for at least an hour.



Tips

Note: You can use vanilla essence instead of extract if that's all you have - that would be 2 teaspoons though!

Portions

This recipe makes 16 - 20 biscuits.

Storing

Can be stored in a metal biscuit tin, or in airtight plastic tubs.

They are meant for eating within a day or so as they can go soft quite quickly.

Do not refrigerate.

Techniques

There are no special techniques if you are making individual biscuits. A good one to get the children involved.

Lining a Baking Tray



Line the baking tray with greaseproof paper.

See Technique.



All ingredients mixed to a sticky ball!



Dump the mix into the baking tray



Spread the mix into the corners – about ½ inch thick



After about 10 minutes cooling, release the biscuits from the grease proof paper.



Cut the biscuits whilst the mix is warm - not hot and not cold – to reduce the chances of crumbling.





About The Author

David Abbott was born in Fife, Scotland, in 1960. He has enjoyed a diverse work life including Glider Maintenance, Electronics, Software Engineering, Commercial Insurance Advisor and Business Consultant. He is now retired.

He has dabbled in several hobbies in his later years, most significantly gardening, golfing and cooking.

He was married to Wendy for over 30 years and has a son, Michael.

Wendy passed away unexpectedly in 2020 and David assumed responsibility for looking after the shopping and cooking for Wendy's mum, Marion.

Many of the ingredients for Marion's Meals come from his own garden and poly tunnel. He also provides shrubs and flowers for the local community gardens.

He has experience in amateur cooking - responsible for catering small family groups; for many hundreds of people at Scout jamborees; for large weddings and for routine service at a local golf club. He prepares and donates hundreds of meals per year to others.

He now wants to pass on the philosophy of Marion's Meals.