

# Slow Energy Efficient



Slow  
Cooking  
Toolkit



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# Why a Slow Cooker?

Using a slow cooker is an easy way of making tasty nutritional meals at affordable prices.

## **Simplicity**

Making a delicious slow cooked meal is as easy as simply adding a bunch of ingredients to the slow cooker and leaving it to cook overnight or throughout the day. There are a great variety of recipes for slow cooker meals.

## **Time**

It only takes a few minutes to prepare a meal in a slow cooker, but it needs to cook for a long time. So plan ahead and either prepare in the morning or in the evening. Once prepared store the dish in the fridge until you want to start cooking.

## **Cheap**

A slow cooker is cheap to buy, cheap to run and makes the most of cheap ingredients because it cooks for so long. Slow cookers have a lower energy rating than conventional electric ovens hence they may use less energy compared to cooking an equivalent meal in a conventional oven. You can also use cheaper cuts of meat and use pulses and alternatives to meat.

## **Health**

By cooking your own meals you know exactly what you're eating and slow cooked meals can have all the nutritional requirements that you need without much effort and spending lots of money.

## **Clean**

In many cases you only need to use the slow cooker to create a complete meal, it's easy to clean and reduces the amount of pots and pans you have to wash.

## **Portable**

You can take a slow cooker anywhere and plug it in.

# Using Your Slow Cooker

Using a slow cooker is usually very simple. It normally has three settings; low, medium and high depending on what you're cooking.

**High** is often used to start a recipe and get things going, or to cook something in a shorter amount of time.

**Medium** is usually a good all-round temperature for cooking and it is used most often.

**Low** is often used for desserts or for cooking 'tough' meat very slowly.

Simply clean your slow cooker before you use it, plug it in and follow the instructions given in your recipe. Don't forget to read the instruction manual before use and remember that the ceramic pot can be put into the oven or used for serving.

# Top Tips for Using a Slow Cooker

## Learn a Routine

Using a slow cooker well is all about routine. Preparation time is short but the cooking time is long, so prepare your meals whenever suits you and when you're at home. Many meals need at least 6 to 8 hours to cook, especially tough and cheap cuts of meat.

## Portions and Planning

Using a slow cooker allows you to make things in bigger batches which means any leftovers can be cooled down and put into individual portions which can then be put into the fridge or freezer and taken out and warmed up as you need them. This way you can prepare 1 or 2 large meals which could feed you all week if well portioned.

## Desserts

Slow cookers aren't only for soups and stews; they can also make nice desserts. The cooking time for most desserts is much shorter.

## Temperature Control

It is important that you follow the temperature regulations in recipes when cooking with a slow cooker. There are usually only 3 settings; low, medium and high. Make sure you use the right setting and also preheat if necessary.

## Seasoning and Taste

Sometimes people say that slow cooker meals are bland. This mostly happens when they haven't been seasoned properly, and it also happens more often when you simply add ingredients to the pot. By using good ingredients and adding seasoning before and after cooking you should have good results. Also, you can add condiments like herbs and lemon juice at the end to add flavour. Reduced salt soy sauce, miso paste, stock cubes and tomato paste are all good ways of adding more flavour if you don't simply want to add salt.

## Cooking Technique

If you want to create more flavour in your slow cooker meals, it really helps to stir-fry your vegetables for 5 minutes and to brown your meat before adding it to the slow cooker. This can't really be done in your slow cooker as it doesn't get hot enough so it is best to use a normal frying pan. You can also add some seasoning to vegetables or meat when browning them off.

## Slow Meat vs Quick Meat

Slow cookers are particularly good for cooking tough cuts of meat that need to be cooked long and slow, such as shank, shin, shoulder, etc. After 6-12 hours of cooking this meat usually falls off the bone and is beautifully tender and flavourful. However, you can use all kinds of meat, and some cook a lot faster. Sausages, minced meat, strips of tender chicken or fish only need 1-2 hours, especially if browned beforehand.

# Top Tips continued...

## **Cooking Layers**

Most of the heat in a slow cooker comes from the bottom, so if you want to make sure that something cooks well, you should place it in the bottom. This includes your meat, but also thick vegetables like carrots.

## **Preheating**

Preheating the slow cooker before you start preparing your recipe is always good practice, it takes some time for the slow cooker to heat up so preheating will speed up the process.

## **Rice, Pasta and Desserts**

These can also be cooked in a slow cooker, but for best results beware of cooking times. Different brands of slow cookers have higher or lower cooking temperatures and with rice, pasta and desserts there is a risk of food burning slightly or over cooking, so checking halfway between cooking time is a good idea, and possibly every half hour after that.

*For more information see the useful links section (Appendix 1).*

# Energy Saving Tips in the Kitchen

- Cook a large amount of food and freeze in portions for future use
- Only boil the amount of water you need in the kettle but be sure to cover the element of an electric kettle
- Allow food to cool and then freeze or put into the fridge within 2 hours
- Don't leave the fridge or freezer door open for longer than necessary
- Defrost fridges and freezers regularly to keep them working efficiently
- Consider replacing older appliances with more efficient models, the "A" rated are the most efficient

# Sourcing Ingredients and Budgeting

## Suppliers

Sourcing ingredients for most of us means going to the supermarket or shop, but there are so many other interesting ways of getting great quality produce for affordable prices.

Markets are a great place to find good ingredients. Look out for local produce and shop around, ask questions and try to haggle for a good price! Why not ask if there is any produce close to the use by date but make sure you plan to use it straight away.

Greengrocers, butchers, fishmongers and bakers can also be a great opportunity for getting good ingredients. Again, shop around and look for great deals and once you become a regular customer why not ask for beef bones for broth or older vegetables for soup.

Sometimes you can also get in touch with local farmers, to buy directly from them. This is usually rare though, except if they do a box scheme or sell from the roadside or the end of their lane.

*Appendix 2 contains examples of markets and suppliers.*

### **In general the following rules apply to good affordable food when shopping:**

- Home cooked food is almost always cheaper than buying it readymade, even when considering electricity or gas. It is also usually more nutritious, especially when using good produce.
- Try using 'cheap' cuts of meat, whole chicken or fish, and use the bones to make broth.
- Fruit and vegetables that are in season are cheaper. Also buying in bulk is cheaper as well as getting slightly older fruit and vegetables for cooking.
- Try and shop around for deals, and be careful when comparing total price and price per gram or unit.
- Don't buy too much, especially fresh foods, as they can spoil easily. Try to reduce waste and cost by freezing or cooking fresh ingredients and by using leftovers.
- Buying bulk dried goods and cans is a great way of saving money, especially when buying high quality produce.

*For more information see the useful links section (Appendix 1).*

# Basic Health and Safety when Preparing Food

- Wash your hands well before preparing food and make sure that your equipment, such as knives, cutting boards and your slow cooker are clean before use.
- Always wash utensils, cutlery and other kitchen equipment in hot soapy water.
- Avoid cutting raw meat and fish on the same cutting board as vegetables, fruit, cooked meat etc. and always wash the chopping board after use. Remember there are other options including buying it pre cut or asking your butcher to cut it.
- Store fresh food appropriately, don't overcrowd the fridge, keep meat and fish at the right temperature, separate from fruit, vegetables and dairy and at the bottom of the fridge.
- Check the 'use by date' before using an ingredient, smelling and looking for possible signs of ageing is also a good indication of freshness. Don't use a product if it is past the use by date and remember that food poisoning bacteria does not always make food smell.
- Make sure raw meat is cooked thoroughly.
- Only reheat food once and make sure it is piping hot before it is eaten.
- Any leftovers that are not going to be used within the next couple of days should be frozen and eaten on the same day as defrosted.

*For more information see the useful links section (Appendix 1).*

# Affordable?

The question of what is affordable means something different to everybody, it obviously depends on how much money you have available and your other costs in life. It also depends on whether you think something is worth it or not. Most studies and people working in the food industry will agree that the better the quality of your ingredients, the better they will taste and have a positive effect on your health. Higher quality products don't have to cost that much more, sometimes you can get a good deal, or you can buy staple foods like rice, pasta, flour and pulses in bulk for a better price. The same goes for meat, if you buy a whole chicken it is cheaper per gram than buying fillets, and the same applies to fish.

In general it is good to have an open mind about food; it can be very interesting and exciting to find out more about where our food comes from, what the quality is and how it is being prepared and it is definitely possible to eat well and healthily on a budget. The choice is yours.

# A note on Salt, Fat and Sweets

How much salt, fat and sugar to consume in ones diet is always a controversial topic. If you are trying to lose weight or live a healthy lifestyle then it makes sense to reduce your intake of fats, oils and high fat products. You can cut down on these fats or use low-fat options, whether that is cheese, meat, spreads etc. Choose fats and oils high in monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fat e.g. rapeseed oil, olive oil, sunflower oil.

Too much salt is never good and especially if you suffer from high blood pressure or high cholesterol so it is a good idea to reduce the amount of salt you use. Either don't use it at all, or use small amounts or reduced salt options. A lot of foods are not obviously salty but can contain high amounts of 'hidden salt'. Checking the nutrition information on food labels can help you choose lower salt options. Try using pepper, herbs and spices, garlic, vinegar, mustard or lemon juice instead of salt to give foods extra flavour.

Similarly with desserts and sweets you should try to keep these at a minimum for a healthy lifestyle. It is best to consider them as a weekend treat.

# Grow Your Own

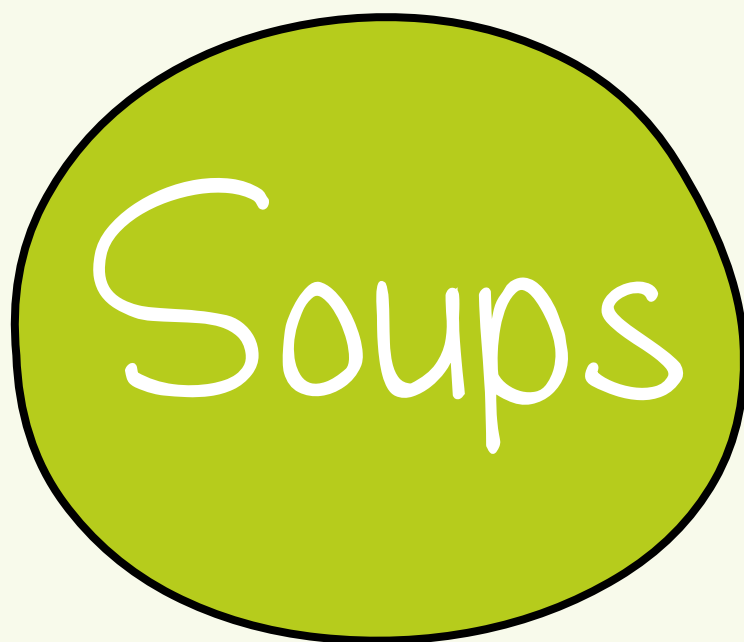
Another great way of sourcing top quality produce is by growing your own fruit and vegetables and possibly keeping your own hens for eggs. Joining an allotment or community garden, or starting a fruit and vegetable plot in your back garden, can be fun and very productive and save you lots of money. Starting off with herbs is especially satisfying, they are easy to grow and many will keep for years and will add flavour to your dishes without spending much money. When it comes to fruit and vegetables, it can be very easy but it can also be a let-down depending on how much you know and what the weather is like. It is always good to ask advice from somebody who is successful with their crops and if you are successful you will realise how much better your home grown produce tastes and how much less money you spend on groceries. The same goes for keeping your own hens, even though a serious commitment, getting started with hens isn't that expensive and they are lovely animals and their eggs are so much better than anything you can buy at a fraction of the cost. They are also great at keeping down the number of slugs in your garden and weeding the vegetable patch in winter.

*For more information see the useful links section (Appendix 1).*

# Seasonal Fruit and Vegetables

<b>Apples</b>	September - February
<b>Pears</b>	September - December
<b>Plums</b>	August - September
<b>Cherries</b>	July - August
<b>Oranges</b>	November - February
<b>Lemons</b>	November - February
<b>Rhubarb</b>	March - July
<b>Strawberries</b>	May - August
<b>Raspberries</b>	July - November
<b>Blackcurrants</b>	July - August
<b>Blackberries</b>	July - November
<b>Blueberries</b>	July - September
<b>Gooseberries</b>	June - August
<b>Asparagus</b>	April - June
<b>Beetroot</b>	July - November
<b>Broad Beans</b>	May - September
<b>Brussel Sprouts</b>	November - February
<b>Broccoli</b>	July - April
<b>Carrots</b>	July - March
<b>Cauliflower</b>	July - November
<b>Celery</b>	August - February
<b>Cucumber</b>	July - October
<b>Kale</b>	July - April
<b>Leeks</b>	October - April
<b>Lettuce</b>	April - November
<b>Onions</b>	July - September
<b>Parsnips</b>	August - March
<b>Peas</b>	June - August
<b>Potatoes</b>	July - November
<b>Squash</b>	August - October
<b>Turnips</b>	August - March
<b>Tomatoes</b>	July - October





# Chicken Broth

This is an all-time favourite soup, incredibly delicious and simply good for you. It is also a great way of cooking chicken and other meats.

**Ingredients:** 1 medium whole chicken  
or 6-8 chicken drumsticks or thighs (remove skin)  
2 medium onions or 1 leek  
2-3 large carrots  
2-3 celery sticks  
Boiling water

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 peeler  
1 spoon

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker on high. Peel and chop your vegetables into cubes or ½ inch chunks and add all ingredients to the slow cooker, cover the chicken and vegetables with boiling water, stir all ingredients and leave to cook for 6-12 hours on low. When the chicken broth is ready, remove the chicken and take the meat off the bone and discard the bones. Add the meat back into the broth and any other condiments you like to get the taste you want.

**Why not try:** Using any leftover chicken or pork for Mexican food or even sandwiches. The broth can also be used separately for making risottos and other rice dishes, and also to add flavour to stews.

**Optional Ingredients:** 1 handful of parsley  
3 bay leaves  
1 sprig of thyme  
Pepper and any other condiments to taste

**Alternative Ingredients:** 2-3 beef bones, beef shank, pork or lamb shoulder, turkey leg  
Any other soup vegetables

<b>Cost</b>	£0.85 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	10-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-12 hrs on low

# Seasonal Vegetable Soup

This very satisfying soup is great for every season of the year and is packed full of nutrients.

**Ingredients:** 2-3 large carrots  
2 celery sticks or 1 handful of soup celery  
1-2 onions or 1 leek  
3-4 leaves of cabbage, spinach or chard  
2 vegetable, chicken or beef reduced salt stock cubes  
Boiling water

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 cutting board  
1 peeler  
1 spoon

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker. Peel and chop your vegetables into cubes or ½ inch chunks and add everything to the slow cooker. Add the stock cubes, by either dissolving in water or crumbling into the soup, and simply cover the ingredients with boiling water. If using barley, lentils, pasta or rice add these 1 hour before serving or cook in a separate pot and add just before serving. When the soup is ready check for seasoning and add any condiments you like.

**Why not try:** Customising to your particular taste. Adding pasta or rice makes it more bulky and turns it into a real meal and you can add many condiments like cheese or pesto to create interesting flavours.

**Optional Ingredients:** Parsnips, turnip, swede, potatoes, cauliflower etc.  
Rice or pasta  
Barley, lentils, soup mix  
Grated low-fat cheese  
Pepper, reduced salt soy sauce, low-fat pesto etc.

<b>Cost</b>	£0.45 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8
<b>Preparation Time</b>	10-15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	4-6hrs on low

# Potato and Leek Soup

This soup is easy to make, creamy and delicious.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 large onion
- 2 medium leeks
- 4 medium potatoes
- 1-2 reduced salt stock cubes or fresh broth
- 2 tablespoons of low-fat crème fraîche
- Pepper to taste
- Boiling water

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 cutting board
- 1 peeler
- 1 spoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. Peel and chop your vegetables, add to the slow cooker along with the stock cubes and boiling water or fresh broth until the vegetables are just covered. If using add any herbs or spices, and then cook on low. When the vegetables are cooked, add the crème fraîche, any additional condiments and if you have a blender use it to create a smooth soup. Check the seasoning and add any additional toppings.

**Why not try:**

This soup lends itself to customising by adding tasty condiments and toppings thus making it a complete meal.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- 2 bay leaves
- 1 pinch of nutmeg and chilli
- Grated low-fat cheese
- Poached eggs
- Shredded chicken/meat or fish

**Optional Equipment:**

- 1 blender

<b>Cost</b>	£0.43 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	4-6hrs on low

# Minestrone Soup

This classic Italian soup is great for using up summer vegetables and is packed full of Mediterranean flavours. You can use fresh herbs or leave them out, but it tastes more authentic with herbs.

## Ingredients:

- 1 large carrot
- 2 celery sticks
- 2 large onions
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 red peppers
- 2 courgettes
- 2 tins of tomatoes, 1 bottle of tomato passata, or 6-8 medium tomatoes
- 3 vegetable, chicken or beef reduced salt stock cubes
- 150g peas, broad beans, green beans or cannellini beans
- 100g pasta or rice
- Boiling water

## Equipment:

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 cutting board
- 1 peeler
- 1 spoon

## Method:

Preheat the slow cooker. Peel and chop the vegetables into cubes or ½ inch chunks and add everything to the slow cooker. The garlic should be either finely chopped or crushed. Add the stock cubes, by either dissolving in water or crumbling into the soup, and simply cover the ingredients with boiling water. Cook for 6 hours on low and add the pasta or rice 30-45 minutes before serving, or cook in a separate pot and add just before serving. Check for seasoning and add some pesto or other condiments if you like.

## Optional Ingredients:

- 2-3 bay leaves
- 1 handful of chopped Mediterranean herbs (rosemary, thyme, oregano)
- Grated low-fat cheese
- Low-fat pesto

<b>Cost</b>	£0.67 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	10-15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6hrs on low

# Bouillabaisse

This is a great fish soup from the Provence area in the south of France. Traditionally local fish is cooked in a rich broth and the soup is served separately from the fish. It is classic to serve a piece of crostini and "rouille", a spicy sauce, on top of the soup. This recipe is a simplified version of the classic soup.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 red pepper
- 2 large onions
- 1 large carrot
- 4 garlic cloves
- 4 tablespoons of tomato paste
- 4 medium tomatoes
- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 tablespoon of ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon of ground coriander
- 200g cod fillet, haddock or pollock
- 200g mackerel fillet, salmon or tuna
- 3 vegetable, chicken or beef reduced salt stock cubes
- Boiling water

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 cutting board
- 1 peeler
- 1 spoon

**Method:**

Preheat the slow cooker. Peel and chop the vegetables into cubes or ½ inch chunks and add to the slow cooker. The garlic should be either finely chopped or crushed. The fish should be cut into ½ inch chunks and added to the slow cooker with the rest of the ingredients. Add the stock cubes, by either dissolving in water or crumbling into the soup and simply cover the ingredients with boiling water. Cook for 6 hours on low. When the soup is ready check for seasoning and you can add a couple of crostini and some rouille or tabasco to each serving if using.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- 2-3 bay leaves
- 1 handful of chopped Mediterranean herbs (rosemary, thyme, oregano)
- Toasted crostini or even toast
- Rouille, tabasco or chilli

<b>Cost</b>	£1.22 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8 - 10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	10-15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6hrs on low

# Sausage & White Bean Soup

The combination of Italian Sausage and white beans and spinach makes an incredibly delicious and satisfying soup

## Ingredients:

1 tablespoon of lemon juice  
3 tablespoons of freshly chopped parsley  
Handful of fresh spinach, stems removed  
2 chorizo sausages casings removed, chopped  
½ teaspoon of pepper  
2 tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce  
2 medium sized sweet potatoes chopped  
550g of tinned cannellini beans rinsed and drained  
1 reduced salt chicken stock cube  
2 garlic cloves minced  
1 chopped onion  
2 back bacon slices, diced  
Boiling water

## Equipment:

1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 tablespoon  
1 teaspoon

## Method:

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the bacon and sausage in a frying pan and drain on paper towels. Otherwise simply add the bacon and sausage to the slow cooker. Add the onion, garlic, stock cube, cannellini beans, sweet potato, sweet chilli sauce, pepper and about 1 litre of boiling water. Stir thoroughly. Cover and cook for 8 to 10 hours on low or 4 to 5 hours on high. Add parsley and spinach and stir well. Cover and cook for 5 minutes on high until spinach is wilted. Add lemon juice, stir well and serve.

## Optional Ingredients:

For a lower fat and salt version use low fat/high meat content sausages  
Other canned beans such as pinto/mixed beans  
Any other vegetables that you like  
Replace the sweet chilli sauce with a pinch of chilli powder

## Other Optionals:

Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£0.76 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	20-25 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	8-10 hours on low/4-5 hours on high

# Slow Cooker Corn Chowder

A great comfort food, warming, tasty and easy to prepare

**Ingredients:** 110g of back bacon, chopped and rind removed  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
1 clove of garlic, minced  
3 large potatoes, peeled and diced  
1 reduced salt vegetable stock cube  
Chopped celery  
1-2 spring onions  
2 x 200g reduced salt tins of sweetcorn, drained  
25g of cornflour  
2 tablespoons of cold water  
300ml of semi skimmed milk  
2 tablespoons of chopped fresh parsley  
Boiling water

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 tablespoon

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker on low. If you can, brown off the bacon and onions by adding 1 teaspoon of oil to a frying pan over a medium heat. Otherwise simply add the bacon and onions to your slow cooker. Then add the garlic and the remainder of the ingredients with 600ml of boiling water. Mix the cornflour and cold water together prior to adding to the cooker. Cook on low for 6 to 8 hours.

**Tip:** The variety of potatoes used for the chowder may have an effect on the amount of liquid in the slow cooker after 6 to 8 hours. Top up with water if the cooker begins to get a little dry. If there is too much liquid turn the cooker to high and thicken with a little extra cornflour.

**Optional Ingredients:** Sprig of thyme

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£0.61 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-8 hours on low



# Irish Stew

This is a great classic stew based on simple and cheap ingredients, but it can be vamped up by using some herbs and other condiments. You can also use lamb or beef, depending on what you prefer.

**Ingredients:** 500g lamb stewing steak, minced meat or beef equivalent  
6 small onions  
4 medium carrots  
4 medium potatoes  
3 bay leaves  
1 reduced salt beef stock cube or fresh lamb/beef stock  
Pepper to taste  
Boiling water

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 peeler  
1 cutting board  
1 spoon

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. If possible, brown off your meat until golden brown and add to the slow cooker. Peel and cut your vegetables into 1-2 inch cubes, if possible, fry these off after the meat, if not just add to the slow cooker. If browning off, the frying pan can now be deglazed with water, and the liquid added to the slow cooker along with the rest of the ingredients. Use either fresh warm stock or add stock cubes and boiling water until the ingredients are covered. Now cook on low for 6-12hrs, when finished check the seasoning and add any condiments that you like.

**Optional Ingredients:** Reduced salt soy sauce or miso paste  
2 tablespoons of low-fat crème fraîche

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£0.83 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10 - 12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-12hrs on low

# Moroccan Chicken Tagine

This is an incredibly tasty and fragrant chicken stew, still simple but well worth the effort.

**Ingredients:**

- 8 chicken thighs, on the bone or off the bone (remove the skin)
- 2 carrots
- 2 medium onions
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon of mixed spice or cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons of ground coriander
- 1 reduced salt chicken stock cube
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- Boiling water, or fresh chicken stock

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 cutting board
- 1 peeler
- 1 teaspoon
- 1 tablespoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the chicken thighs by adding 1 teaspoon of oil to a frying pan and frying the chicken for 3-5 minutes on each side until golden brown. Otherwise simply add the chicken to the slow cooker. Cut your vegetables into cubes or ½ inch chunks, then add these and the other ingredients, then cover with boiling water or fresh hot stock. If using dried fruit and almonds add them to the top and then cook for 6-12hrs. When the dish is ready, taste and add any condiments to your liking.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- 1 courgette, bell pepper or aubergine
- 100g flaked almonds
- 100g dried apricots or figs
- Harissa paste or chilli powder

**Other Optionals:**

- Frying pan
- Forks or tongs
- Frylite or 1 teaspoon of rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.18 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10 - 12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-12hrs on low

# Veggie Curry

This curry is pretty easy to make yourself, especially when buying curry paste.

**Ingredients:** 4 tablespoons of curry paste or 1 jar of curry sauce  
(Check description for heat and flavour)  
1 large onion  
1 cauliflower  
1 aubergine  
2 bell peppers  
1 can of reduced fat coconut milk or cream  
1-2 reduced salt stock cubes or fresh broth

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 cutting board  
1 tablespoon

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. If using raw meat, if possible brown off in a frying pan before adding to the bottom of the slow cooker. Chop your vegetables into 1 inch pieces, add the curry paste or sauce, the coconut milk and stock cubes or fresh broth and cover the top of the ingredients. Check the curry paste for heat and flavour in the product description to ensure the curry is to your taste. If using soaked lentils or potatoes add them now. Cook on low until ready, if using cooked meat/fish or lentils add them 5 minutes before serving to warm up, check the seasoning and add any condiments or more curry paste.

**Why not try:** Customising this recipe with any vegetables that you like, and bulk it up with lentils, potatoes, beans, meat or fish.

**Optional Ingredients:** 1 cup of soaked or cooked lentils or beans  
2 medium potatoes  
Chicken, meat or fish  
Reduced salt soy sauce or miso paste

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£0.89 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8 - 10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-12hrs on low

# Bolognese

Bolognese can be a simple sauce for pasta but in its origins it is a hearty stew added to pasta.

**Ingredients:** 500g minced meat, beef or pork sausages  
3 tins of tomatoes or 8 large tomatoes  
1 large onion  
1 large carrot  
2 celery sticks  
2 bell peppers  
1-2 reduced salt beef stock cubes, or fresh broth  
Pepper to taste  
Boiling water/fresh broth

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 peeler  
1 chopping board  
1 spoon

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. If possible brown off your meat and vegetables. Use water to deglaze the pan and add to the slow cooker along with the meat and vegetables. Otherwise add your meat to the bottom of the slow cooker then all your other ingredients, and cover everything with fresh broth or boiling water. If using herbs, or potatoes, add them now and cook for 2 hrs on high or 6-8hrs on low. When cooked check seasoning and add any final ingredients like the pasta or condiments.

**Why not try:** Adding potatoes or cooked pasta to make this stew a dish in itself.

**Optional Ingredients:** 3 bay leaves  
1 sprig of rosemary and thyme  
3 medium potatoes, or 2-3 cups cooked pasta  
Reduced salt soy sauce

**Other Optionals:** 1 frying pan  
1 tablespoon of rapeseed oil or frylite  
Tongs or forks

<b>Cost</b>	£1.28 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10 - 12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2hrs on high or 6-8hrs on low

# Fish Chowder

Chowder is one of the easiest and satisfying fish dishes to make.  
When possible try to use only the freshest seafood.

**Ingredients:**

- 1-2 fillets of smoked haddock, pollock etc (can be frozen)
- 1-2 fillets of salmon
- 100-150g shrimps or/and mussels
- 1 large onion or 1 leek
- 2 large carrots
- 2 celery sticks
- 4 medium potatoes
- 250ml milk
- 1 reduced salt vegetable stock cube or fresh broth
- 3 bay leaves
- Pepper to taste
- Boiling water/fresh broth

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 peeler
- 1 chopping board
- 1 spoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If using frozen fish it is best to thaw overnight in the fridge or you can place the fish into the slow cooker and cover with hot liquid. Otherwise cut your fish into ½ inch chunks and add to the bottom of the slow cooker, then add your milk and bay leaves. Peel and chop your vegetables, add these and the broth to the cooker to cover all ingredients and cook. When everything is cooked check your seasoning and add any extra toppings.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- 1 handful of low-fat grated cheese
- 1 pinch of nutmeg
- 100ml low-fat cream
- Reduced salt soy sauce

<b>Cost</b>	£1.37 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8 - 10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2-3hrs on high or 6hrs on low

# All in One Roast

Even though roasting as such isn't possible with a slow cooker, it is possible to make an 'all in one' meat dish that isn't a stew. Simply choose what meat you like and what vegetables you want and which flavours you're going for.

**Ingredients:** 1 small beef or lamb roast, or 4 chicken thighs/drumsticks (Remove skin)  
1-2 large onions  
4 medium potatoes  
200g brussel sprouts  
250ml broth or reduced salt stock cubes in boiling water  
Pepper to taste

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 chopping board  
1 peeler  
Baking parchment  
1 tablespoon

**Method:** If possible marinate your meat with the soy sauce, garlic, honey and any optional flavours that you like. Put all of this in a ziploc bag with your meat and leave in the fridge for 3-12 hours, the longer the better. Preheat the slow cooker. Add a few drops of water to the bottom of the slow cooker and use a sheet of baking parchment to line the inside of the cooker; this will prevent your ingredients from burning. Chop your onions into ½ inch pieces, and then add to the bottom and cover with broth. Then add your meat, and the marinade, then chop your potatoes and brussel sprouts and add to the top. Season the sprouts and potatoes then cook for 8-12hrs on low. When everything is cooked, check that the meat is tender and that the vegetables are seasoned to your taste. The onions and the liquid at the bottom of the slow cooker can be used like an onion gravy, you can also use this liquid to make a proper gravy in a separate pot.

**Optional Ingredients:** 4 tablespoons of reduced salt soy sauce  
1 tablespoon honey  
3 cloves garlic  
1 inch piece ginger  
1 pinch of chilli  
2 tablespoons of mirin and 1 tablespoon of miso paste  
Any other vegetables that you like

**Other Optionals:** 1 ziploc bag

<b>Cost</b>	£3.43 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	8-12hrs on low

# Chicken & Chorizo Stew

This stew is quick to prepare and full of flavour.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 chicken breasts, diced
- 100g of chorizo sausage, sliced
- 1 teaspoon of chilli powder
- 2 x 400g tins of chopped tomatoes
- 1 reduced salt chicken stock cube
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tablespoon of tomato puree
- 450g of potatoes
- 125ml of boiling water

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 spoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, heat the oil in a large pan and fry the chicken for a couple of minutes on each side and then add the diced chorizo for a few minutes. Otherwise simply add the chicken and chorizo to your slow cooker. Add the onion, tomatoes, stock cube, tomato puree, garlic, chilli powder and boiling water and stir. Then add the potatoes, cover the pan and cook for 6-8 hours on low until the potatoes are cooked. If adding olives, add about 20 minutes before serving. Top with soured cream/crème fraiche and fresh coriander.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- 30g of olives
- 50ml of soured cream/0% fat crème fraiche
- 1 tablespoon of fresh coriander

**Other Optionals:**

- Frying pan
- Forks or tongs
- Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.14 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	20-25 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-7 hours on low

# Ratatouille

A super healthy classic French vegetarian dish.

**Ingredients:**

- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 1 large garlic clove, crushed
- 350g (12oz) small aubergines, thinly sliced
- 450g (1lb) small courgettes, thinly sliced
- 450g (1lb) tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 green and 1 red pepper, each deseeded and sliced
- 2 teaspoons of freshly chopped thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons of sun-dried tomato puree
- 1 tablespoon of freshly chopped basil
- 2 tablespoons of freshly chopped flat leaf parsley

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 tablespoon
- 1 teaspoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. Peel and chop the vegetables, crush or finely chop the garlic and add to the slow cooker. Add the thyme, tomato puree and seasoning and stir. Cover and cook on high for 3-4 hours until all the vegetables are tender. Stir in the remaining herbs and season to taste. Serve with crusty bread, pasta, rice or as a side dish to roast meat.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- Chopped oregano
- Spice it up with harissa paste or chilli powder

<b>Cost</b>	£0.70 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6 - 8
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 -20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	3 - 4 hours on low

# Chilli Con Carne

An incredibly tasty family favourite.

**Ingredients:**

- 450g (1lb) minced beef
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon of hot chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon of ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon of paprika
- 3 tablespoons of tomato purée
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- Tin of red kidney beans in chilli sauce
- 40g (1½oz) fresh coriander, chopped

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 tablespoon
- 1 teaspoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, heat oil in a large pan and fry the beef for 10 minutes or until well browned, stirring to break up any lumps. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon and transfer to the slow cooker. Otherwise simply add the beef to your slow cooker. Add the onion, spices, tomato purée, tomatoes and tin of red kidney beans. Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours. Stir in the coriander and season then turn off the cooker and leave to stand for 10 minutes. Serve with boiled rice or in a tortilla wrap.

**Optional Ingredients:**

Optional extras to serve:  
Guacamole, salsa, natural yoghurt, grated cheese and pickled jalapeno chillies.

**Other Optionals:**

- Frying pan
- Forks or tongs
- Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.11 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4 - 6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	25 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	4-5 hours on low

# Curried Lamb with Lentils

This curry uses a great value cut of meat for a tasty dinner. You can also use chicken or beef.

**Ingredients:** 500g (1lb 2oz) lean stewing lamb on the bone, cut into 8 pieces (ask your butcher to do this), fat trimmed  
1 teaspoon of ground cumin  
1 teaspoon of ground turmeric  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
1 medium red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped  
2.5cm (1in) piece fresh root ginger, peeled and grated  
1 onion, finely chopped  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
2 tablespoons of vinegar  
175g (6oz) red lentils, rinsed

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 tablespoon  
1 teaspoon

**Method:** Put the lamb into a shallow sealable container and add the spices, garlic, chilli, ginger and some seasoning. Stir well to mix, then cover and chill for at least 30 minutes. Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the lamb by adding 1 teaspoon of oil to a frying pan and fry over a medium high heat until the meat is evenly browned. Otherwise simply add the lamb to your slow cooker. Add the onion, tomatoes, vinegar, lentils and 225ml (8fl oz) of boiling water and bring to the boil. Season well. Cover and cook on low for 6-7 hours until the lamb is tender. Serve with rice or naan bread.

**Optional Ingredients:** Handful of fresh coriander leaves to garnish  
Sweet potato

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.20 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4
<b>Preparation Time</b>	35 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-7 hours on low

# Mushroom and Bean Hotpot

A tasty vegetarian hotpot with a bit of spice

**Ingredients:** 700g (1½lb) chestnut mushrooms, roughly chopped  
1 large onion, finely chopped  
2 tablespoons of plain flour  
2 tablespoons of mild curry paste  
150 ml (¼ pint) dry white wine (optional) or reduced salt vegetable stock cube in 150ml boiling water  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
2 tablespoons of sun-dried tomato paste  
2 × 400 g tins mixed beans, drained and rinsed  
3 tablespoons of mango chutney or tinned mangos in juice

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 tablespoon

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the mushrooms and onions by adding 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil to a frying pan over a medium heat until the vegetables are just softened and golden. Stir in the flour and curry paste and cook for 1-2 minutes. Otherwise simply add these ingredients to the slow cooker. Add the wine, chopped tomatoes, tomato paste and beans. Cover and cook on low for 2-3 hours. Stir in the mango chutney/tinned mangos and chopped herbs and serve with rice or naan bread.

**Optional Ingredients:** 3 tablespoons of freshly chopped coriander and mint leaves

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.60 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4-6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2-3 hours on low

# Sausage and Bean Hotpot

Great comfort food using one of our favourite store cupboard ingredients – baked beans.

**Ingredients:**

- 8 good-quality pork sausages
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 x 415g tins of reduced sugar and salt baked beans
- 2 tablespoons of tomato puree
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon of Worcestershire Sauce

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 tablespoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the sausages in a frying pan for 3-5 minutes on each side. Otherwise simply add the sausages to the slow cooker. Add the onion and carrots, stir in the baked beans, tomato puree, bay leaf, Worcestershire sauce and season. Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours. Remove the bay leaf before serving with a green salad or crusty bread.

**Optional Ingredients:**

- Cannellini beans
- Chilli powder
- Grated low fat cheese

**Other Optionals:**

- Frying pan
- Forks or tongs
- Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.01 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4
<b>Preparation Time</b>	20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	4-5 hours on low

# Paprika Beef Stew

A hearty stew flavoured with paprika served with rice or potatoes.

**Ingredients:** 750g (1lb 11oz) stewing steak, excess fat trimmed, cut into 2cm (¾in) cubes  
25g (1oz) plain flour  
1 red onion, roughly chopped  
1 red and green pepper, deseeded and roughly chopped  
1½ teaspoons of paprika  
5 tablespoons of tomato purée  
1 reduced salt beef stock cube  
250g (9oz) long-grain rice, washed  
Boiling water

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 tablespoon  
1 teaspoon

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the beef by adding 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil to a frying pan and frying the beef dusted in flour over a high heat. Add the onion, peppers, paprika and tomato purée and fry for 5 minutes. Otherwise add the beef, onion, peppers, paprika and tomato puree to the slow cooker. Add the beef stock cube and cover in boiling water. Cook on low for 6-8 hours or until the beef is tender. Garnish the beef with the coriander or parsley and a drizzle of cream, if using. Serve with boiled rice.

**Optional Ingredients:** Fresh coriander or parsley to garnish  
Cream to drizzle on serving  
Smoked paprika for a smokier taste  
Try using brown rice instead of white

**Other Optionals:** Frying pan  
Forks or tongs  
Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£2.10 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6-7
<b>Preparation Time</b>	20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-8 hours on low

# Slow Cooker Beef Curry

Full of flavour and tender beef due to its long cook time.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 400g beef stewing steak
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon of chopped fresh ginger
- 1 fresh green chilli, diced
- 1 tablespoon of curry powder
- 1 (400g) tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 onion, sliced and quartered
- 1 reduced salt 250ml beef stock cube
- ¼ teaspoon of ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon of plain flour

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 tablespoon
- 1 teaspoon

**Method:**

Preheat your slow cooker on high. If you can, brown off the beef in a frying pan over a medium heat. Remove from pan, reserving juices, and season. Cook and stir the garlic, ginger and chilli in the pan for 2 minutes, until tender, and season with curry powder. Otherwise add the beef, garlic, ginger, chilli, chopped tomatoes, curry powder and stock cube to the slow cooker. Stir and add approximately 250ml of boiling water. Cover and cook for 6-8 hours on low. Serve with rice or potatoes.

**Optional Ingredients:** Chicken, pork or lamb to replace beef

**Other Optionals:**

- Frying pan
- Forks or tongs
- Frylite or 1 teaspoon of olive/rapeseed oil

<b>Cost</b>	£1.33 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	6-8 hours on low

# Barbeque Pulled Pork

A budget-friendly crowd pleaser full of flavour and great the next day for leftovers.

**Ingredients:**

- 1.6kg to 2kg pork shoulder
- 4 tablespoons of reduced salt soya sauce
- 2 tablespoons of brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons of paprika
- 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 tablespoon
- 1 teaspoon
- 1 large bowl

**Method:**

In a large bowl, mix together all of the ingredients, except the pork shoulder. Add the pork and make sure it is coated in the marinade. Cover and place in the fridge overnight.

The next morning, preheat the slow cooker to low. Place the pork and marinade into the slow cooker and cook on low for 8 hours. After 8 hours the pork should be very tender. Remove from the slow cooker and discard any fat. Pull the meat apart with forks and serve. Alternatively, return to the slow cooker and mix with the sauce for a deeper flavour before serving.

**Optional Ingredients:** If you don't want to make the marinade use store bought barbeque sauce instead.

<b>Cost</b>	£0.76 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	20 minutes plus 8 hours marinating
<b>Cooking Time</b>	8 hours on low



# Rice and Pasta Recipes

# Kedgeree

This is a lovely if not slightly unusual rice and fish dish, a mash up between Indian and English cooking which dates back to Victorian times.

**Ingredients:** 250g smoked haddock  
1 leek  
2 cups of basmati rice  
2 and 1/3 cups of water and 1 reduced salt stock cube or fresh broth  
1 tablespoon of garam masala curry powder  
4 hardboiled eggs

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 chopping board  
1 tablespoon

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker on high. Chop your leek finely and add all the ingredients except the fish, sultanas, parsley and egg. Mix the rice mixture with a spoon, then lay the fish and sultanas on top of the rice mixture and cook. When cooked, add the chopped parsley, chopped boiled eggs and juice of ½ lemon and mix the kedgeree slightly to incorporate all ingredients.

**Optional Ingredients** 3 tablespoons of sultanas  
1 handful of parsley  
1 bay leaf  
½ lemon

<b>Cost</b>	£0.57 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	8
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2hrs on high

# Mushroom Risotto

This classic Italian dish can be daunting to make but it's quite simple and delicious when using a slow cooker. Other versions can be made using other vegetables and by adding cooked meat or fish and different types of cheese.

**Ingredients:** 400g arborio or risotto rice  
600ml vegetable or chicken stock  
1 large onion  
10-15 chestnut mushrooms (1 punnet)  
50g parmesan, pecorino or mature cheddar cheese (low fat)  
1 tablespoon of low-fat crème fraiche  
Pepper to taste

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 chopping board  
1 measuring jug  
1 measuring scale

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker on high. Chop your onion finely and add this, including your rice and stock, to the slow cooker. Give it a quick stir then leave to cook. If you can, brown the mushrooms off in a frying pan. If not simply add the mushrooms to the rice mixture. Mix the risotto 1-2 times while it's cooking to check its consistency, then when the rice is cooked, add your crème fraiche, cheese and any other condiments. Give it a good stir and serve.

**Optional ingredients:** ½ teaspoon of truffle oil or paste

**Other Optionals:** 1 frying pan

<b>Cost</b>	£1.96 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	4 - 6
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2-3 hrs on low

# Chicken and Chorizo Paella

Using the slow cooker makes a good paella a lot easier. Again, you can customise this recipe using different vegetables, meat, spices etc that you like.

**Ingredients:**

- 6 chicken thighs or drumsticks (remove skin)
- 150g chorizo sausage
- 1 large onion
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1 bell pepper
- 200g peas, fresh or frozen
- 500g paella rice
- 1.5ltr stock, either fresh or 3 reduced salt stock cubes and water
- 1 lemon
- 1 handful fresh parsley
- Pepper to taste

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 chopping board
- 1 spoon

**Method:**

Preheat the slow cooker on high. If possible, brown off your chicken, chorizo and prawns, if using, in a frying pan. Otherwise add the meat and prawns to the bottom of the slow cooker. Then chop your vegetables and add these along with your other ingredients, except the lemon and parsley, and cook on low for 2-3 hours. Check every hour to make sure there's enough liquid for the rice to soak up. When everything has cooked, add the chopped parsley and juice of 1 lemon and serve.

**Optional ingredients:**

- 250g prawns

**Other  
Optionals**

- 1 frying pan
- 1 teaspoon of oil or frylite
- Tongs or forks

<b>Cost</b>	£2.26 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2-3 hrs on low



# Desserts and Treats

# Rice Pudding

This is an all-time favourite dessert. It's so simple to make and delicious hot or cold.

**Ingredients:** 100g pudding rice  
25g sugar or honey  
25g low-fat butter  
800ml milk

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 measuring scale  
1 measuring jug  
1 spoon

**Method:** Preheat the slow cooker on high. Grease the slow cooker with the butter, then add the other ingredients, the milk hot if you can, and stir. Leave to cook and check every hour and stir making sure it is cooking. Add any spices or condiments and enjoy.

**Optional Ingredients:** Cinnamon, mixed spice  
Jam or fruit compote

<b>Cost</b>	£0.20 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	6 - 8
<b>Preparation Time</b>	5 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2-3hrs on high

# Apple Compote

Apple compote and fruit compotes are a brilliant way of using over ripe or slightly bruised fruit. Once cooked, you can use the compote in so many ways, over yoghurt or ice cream, on bread instead of jam, rice puddings, porridge, muesli and the list goes on. Plus you can add spices like cinnamon to add some extra punch to your compote.

**Ingredients:** 1 kg cooking apples, or 50/50 eating and cooking apples  
(or any other fruit you like)  
1 tablespoon water  
150g sugar, honey, agave syrup or any other sweetener you fancy

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 sharp knife  
1 peeler  
1 chopping board  
1 tablespoon  
1 measuring scale  
1 measuring jug

**Method:** Preheat your slow cooker on high. Peel, core and chop your apples into 1 inch pieces. Add the water to the bottom of the cooker, and if using, grease the inside with the butter. Then add your fruit, your sweetener, stir and then leave to cook. You can also add your spices now if using. When cooked taste to check the sweetness and serve.

**Optional Ingredients:** 1 vanilla pod  
1 cinnamon stick  
4 cloves  
2 star anise  
50g low-fat butter

<b>Cost</b>	£0.22 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10 - 12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	2hrs on high or 6hrs on low

# Bread and Banana Pudding

This is a twist on a classic dessert, and it works really well together, especially because it uses two ingredients which are often past their best, bananas and bread. It's incredibly easy to make and is really nice with yoghurt or cream.

**Ingredients:**

- 450g stale white bread
- 2 very ripe bananas (or 150g fruit)
- 2 ½ cups of milk
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 ½ teaspoons of mixed spice or cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Equipment:**

- 1 slow cooker
- 1 measuring cup (or medium sized drinking cup)
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 chopping board
- 1 teaspoon
- 1 fork
- 1 bowl
- 1 whisk

**Method:**

Preheat the slow cooker on high. Cut your bread into 1 inch cubes and put into the slow cooker. With a fork, mash your bananas in a bowl, then add the wet ingredients (milk, eggs and butter if using) and spices and mix with a whisk. If using a drinking cup to measure ensure the wet ingredients cover the bread but do not use a mug. When the wet ingredients are added mix a bit to get an even distribution and cook for 3 hours, checking after 2 hours.

**Optional ingredients:**

- ½ cup of raisins or other dried fruit
- ¼ cup of melted low-fat butter

<b>Cost</b>	£0.44 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10 - 12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	10 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	3 hrs on low

# Slow Cooked Pineapple

This sweet pineapple is delicious with a scoop of ice cream and also great on top of cake or other desserts.

**Ingredients:** 2 medium pineapples (about 1.2kg, sliced)  
100g of brown sugar or 2 tsp of honey  
1 (18-cm) piece fresh ginger (about 140g), thinly sliced  
1 to 2 cinnamon sticks  
Coconut or Vanilla Ice cream for serving

**Equipment:** 1 slow cooker  
1 cutting board  
1 sharp knife  
1 spoon

**Method:** If using whole pineapple, peel, quarter, and discard the core. Cut each quarter in half lengthwise then slice 0.5cm thick slices crosswise. Mix the pineapple with the sugar, ginger, and cinnamon in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 4 hours, until the pineapple is very tender and slightly sweet. Serve warm with scoops of ice cream on top. The compote keeps for up to a week tightly sealed in the refrigerator.

**Optional Ingredients:** Add some lime and fresh coriander leaves for a delicious savoury compote, perfect for serving with roast pork or grilled chicken.

<b>Cost</b>	£0.60 per serving (based on supermarket prices)
<b>Serves</b>	10-12
<b>Preparation Time</b>	15-20 minutes
<b>Cooking Time</b>	4 hours on high

# Appendix 1

## Useful links

<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/10-top-tips-using-slow-cooker>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/eat4cheap/Pages/cheap-food-shopping.aspx>

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/preparing-food-safely>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own>

# Appendix 2

## Examples of markets and suppliers

- **City Food and Garden Market at St George's Market, Belfast**  
- *every Saturday*
- **Causeway Speciality Market, Coleraine**  
- *every second Saturday of the month*
- **Templepatrick Farmers Market at Colman's Garden Centre**  
- *last Sunday of every month*
- **Strabane Farmers Market, Co Tyrone**  
- *last Saturday of every month*
- **Limavady Country Market**  
- *every second Saturday of the month*
- **Walled City Market, Guildhall Square**  
- *first Saturday of every month (February to November)*
- **Vineyard car boot sale in Coleraine, at Vineyard Compassion**  
- *every third Saturday of the month*
- **Ballycastle Market at Seafront**  
- *most Sundays in Summer, less frequent in winter*



*Developed by*  
**Causeway Coast and Glens and Mid and East Antrim Borough Councils**  
in association with  
**Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**  
and funded by  
**The Public Health Agency**