

Time Saving Tips

- If you like the firmer skin of an oven-baked potato, shorten the baking time by piercing the potatoes with a fork and microwaving them for 10 minutes before finishing them off in the oven.
- If wanting browned onions or other root vegetables, don't add any salt until after they are nicely browned and caramelized. Salt slows down the caramelization process.
- Buy legumes such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas when you know that you'll need them soon - the longer the storage time, the longer the cooking time.
- If you like to bake pizza at home, invest in a pizza stone and preheat it in the oven before you start the pizza baking. It takes less time to bake on a hot stone.
- Freeze leftover soup in individual microwavable plastic containers. Pop into the microwave to reheat.
- When cooking vegetables, the smaller the pieces, the quicker they'll cook.
- When removing fat from hot stock, soup, or sauce, pop it into the freezer if there's time, or lay a piece of paper towel on the surface. When you remove the paper towel, much of the fat will be gone. Repeat as needed.
- Make use of your microwave to quick cook vegetables, reheat foods, make sauces, and poach chicken and fish. Read the guide to your microwave so you have the times and instructions for its use firmly in your mind.
- Beans and grains cook quickly in a microwave and keep their distinctive characteristics and proper consistency (not all mushy). Consult your oven pamphlet for exact times for your microwave oven.
- To quickly toast nuts and seeds without your constant attention, place 1/4 cup of nuts or seeds in a microwave dish and add 1 teaspoon of margarine. Microwave on HIGH for about 5 minutes, stirring once after 2 minutes.
- Bake meat loafs, casseroles, soufflés, etc. in individual dishes to cut down on the baking time.
- Bake cake batter in muffin cups instead of a cake pan to cut down on the baking time.
- When sautéing mushrooms, don't crowd the skillet. They need room so the liquid they give off will evaporate quickly so they can brown.

- When making a dish, double or triple the recipe, freezing the extra batches in one or two microwavable plastic containers. Your next meal(s) will be ready in minutes.
- Make use of the defrost feature of your microwave oven to quickly thaw chicken or meat before you start cooking.
- Use a pressure cooker—a three-pound pot roast will cook in under an hour in a pressure cooker.
- Use bamboo steamers to prepare an entire meal in minutes. Layer the ingredients according to their cooking time, the foods that take more time at the bottom of the stack and the ones that take the least time on the top.
- When steaming vegetables, a wet kitchen towel between the pot and the lid will keep the steam in the pot, reducing the cooking time. Be careful the towel does not overhang the pot and catch fire.
- Use a large skillet when reducing liquids before making a sauce. The larger the surface area, the quicker the time it takes for the liquid to evaporate.

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