

*Solar Cookers
Recipe File*

Guidelines for Cooking

- Most recipes take slightly less liquid when cooked in a solar oven.
- Time for cooking depends on the temperature of the food as it is placed in the oven, as well as the brightness of the day.
- Allow plenty of time. Foods hold well in the solar oven without scorching or drying out.
- Check food about once an hour when you're just getting started.
- Most recipes calling for a higher temperature will do fine if you give them more time.

Golden Rule of Solar Cooking

**Get the food on early
and don't worry
about overcooking!**

Types of Solar Cooking Days

- **GOOD:** Clear and sunny. Oven will preheat to 275° - 300°F (130° - 145° Celsius.)
- **FAIR:** Hazy or partly cloudy. Oven will preheat to 200° - 225°F (95° - 105° Celsius.)
- **BAD:** On a completely cloudy day one cannot cook with the sun.

General Cooking Times

- **Vegetables** (Potatoes, carrots, squash, beets, asparagus, etc.)
Preparation: No need to add water if fresh. Cut into slices or "logs" to ensure uniform cooking. Corn will cook fine with or without the cob.
Cooking Time: About 1.5 hours
- **Cereals and Grains** (Rice, wheat, barley, oats, millet, etc.)
Preparation: Mix 2 parts water to every 1 part grain. Amount may vary according to individual taste. Let soak for a few hours for faster cooking. To ensure uniform cooking, shake jar after 50 minutes
Cooking Time: 1.5-2 hours

General Cooking Times

- **Pasta and Dehydrated Soups**

Preparation: First heat water to near boiling (50-70 minutes). Then add pasta or soup mix. Stir or shake, and cook 15 additional minutes.

Cooking Time: 65-85 minutes

- **Beans**

Preparation: Let tough or dry beans soak overnight. Place in cooking jar with water.

Cooking Time: 2-3 hours.

General Cooking Times

- **Eggs**

Preparation: No need to add water.

Cooking Times: 1-1.5 hours, depending on yolk's firmness.

- **Baking**

Preparation: Times vary based on amount of dough.

Cooking Times: Breads: 1-1.5 hours; Biscuits: 1-1.5 hours; Cookies: 1 hour

General Cooking Times

- **Meats** (Chicken, beef, and fish)

Preparation: No need to add water. Longer cooking makes the meat more tender.

Cooking Time: Chicken: 1.5 hours cut up or 2.5 hours whole; Beef: 1.5 hours cut up or 2.5-3 hours for larger cuts; Fish: 1-1.5 hours

Solar Oven Lasagna

- **1 32-oz. jar spaghetti sauce**
- **1 pound ricotta cheese**
- **1 pound mozzarella cheese, shredded**
- **Parmesan cheese**
- **8 oz. package of lasagna noodles**
- Spread 1 1/2 cups of sauce over bottom of dark roaster. Coat uncooked noodles with ricotta cheese and layer over the sauce. Add half of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat layers of sauce, noodles and cheese. Top with remaining sauce. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over the top. Cover and bake for 3 hours. Optional: 1 pound of ground beef cooked in a separate dark pan may be added to the sauce before preparing the lasagna.

Easy French Bread

- **1 package yeast**
- **2 cups water**
- **4 1/2 cups white flour**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**
- **2 teaspoons salt**
- Dissolve yeast in one cup lukewarm water. Sift flour with sugar and salt into a large bowl. Stir in dissolved yeast. Add just enough of the second cup of water to hold dough together. Mix until dough is sticky. Cover with a cloth and let rise until doubled. Butter or grease a round roaster and add dough to dark pan. Let rise another half hour. Cover. Bake in solar oven until golden brown, about 2 hours.

Chicken in the Pot

- **4 chicken breasts, halved and skinned**
- **4 medium potatoes, quartered**
- **2 large carrots, cut in 1-inch chunks**
- **2 stalks celery, cut diagonally in 1-inch chunks**
- **1 can Swanson's chicken broth**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **pinch of basil**
- **pinch of rosemary**
- Place chicken in a 3-quart pot or casserole. Arrange vegetables over the top. Sprinkle with seasonings. Add chicken broth. Cover and cook approximately 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Stir a couple of times while baking. You may substitute thighs for chicken breasts and add other seasonings.

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Split Pea and Potato Soup

1 cup split peas (frequently sold in bulk bins)

1 bouillon cube (chicken, beef, vegetable, etc.) or 1 teaspoon bouillon broth powder

1/2 cup diced potato pieces

Put peas, potatoes, and bouillon in 32 oz. black-painted mason jar. Or, if using a 26 oz. jar, use only 3/4 cup of split peas. Fill jar with water to within 1 inch of neck line. Seal with black-painted ring and lid (oil the inside parts of the lid and ring first). Cooks in 2.5 to 8 hours depending on conditions, solar cooker type, etc.

Note that texture of soup will vary with cooking time. Thoroughly cooked pea soup will have almost no pea chunks in it -- they all dissolve! So watch the soup carefully after the first 1.5 hours if you like your soup with a few remaining split peas.

Easy Solar Sweet & Sour Chicken

- **1 15-oz. can sweet and sour sauce**
- **1 8-oz. can pineapple chunks or tidbits, drained**
- **1 chicken breast or 2 chicken legs**
- If using chicken breasts, cut them in half and remove skin. Cut into small chunks. Place in dark pan. Add sauce and pineapple. Cover and bake for 2 to 3 hours. Serve over brown or white rice.

Sunshine Chili

- **1 pound small red beans (dry)**
- **1 pound ground chuck**
- **2 medium onions**
- **1 small green pepper**
- **1/2 cup fresh parsley, minced**
- **dash of salt and pepper**
- **1 28-oz. can tomatoes (may be blended first)**
- **4 cups V-8 juice**
- **1 tablespoon chili powder**
- Soak red beans in water overnight. Brown ground chuck, onions, green pepper, parsley, salt and pepper. Drain well after about one hour. Add tomatoes, red beans, V-8 juice and chili powder. Cover and bake about 4-5 hours in solar oven; serves 10. You may add more V-8 juice as cooking proceeds.

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Solar Baked Brownies

- **1/2 cup shortening**
- **2 1-oz. squares unsweetened chocolate**
- **2 eggs**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla**
- **3/4 cup flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup broken walnuts**
- Melt shortening and chocolate together in solar cooker; cool. Beat eggs until light; stir in sugar, then chocolate mixture and vanilla. Add dry ingredients, mix well. Add nuts. Bake in greased 9-inch round dark roaster pan, covered, for one hour. Cut into squares.

Crust less Apple Pie

- **6 apples (chopped or sliced)**
- **1/3 cup sugar**
- **Cinnamon**
- **1/2 cup butter**
- **1 cup flour**
- **1 cup brown sugar**
- Place apples and sugar in buttered round or oval black roaster. Work together the flour, brown sugar and butter and sprinkle over apples. Sprinkle cinnamon on top. Cover and bake in solar oven about two hours. Cool, serve with vanilla ice cream.

Foods: quick cooking

(If started early, will be done early on a fair day.)

Rice, whole grains, rolled grain flakes, cereals, most egg dishes, chops, ribs, fish and most poultry, puddings, crackers, cookies, brownies, fruits, green vegetables, shredded vegetables.

Foods: medium cooking

(If started early, ready by noon on a good day or by evening on a fair day.)

Cornbread, gingerbread, medium-sized roasts, quick breads, yeast rolls and buns, soufflés, root vegetables such as potatoes, turnips, some beans such as lentils, black-eyed peas, black beans.

Foods: longest cooking

(If started early, ready for late lunch or dinner on a good day.)

Whole turkey, large roasts, stews and soup and bean pots (unless brought to a boil before placing in solar oven), most yeast breads and cakes, pre-soaked pinto beans, field peas, garbanzo beans, small navy beans, soybeans, kidney beans, red beans, yellow peas, dried peas, split green or brown peas.

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- Most recipes were developed with the simple solar box cookers which cook at temperatures between 250F and 300F.
 - All recipes are courtesy of The Solar Cooking Archive and are available at <http://solarcooking.org/>.