Butternut Squash Soup

When butternut squash is everywhere in the fall, I make this. Squash, carrots, and a touch of thyme simmer until they're ready to blend into something smooth and warm.



SERVES

6

PREP

15 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY

6-7 hours (low) or 3-4 hours (high)

Ingredients

1 (3 lb) butternut squash, peeled & cubed

1 onion, chopped

2 carrots, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

3 cups vegetable broth

1/2 tsp thyme

Salt & pepper, to taste

1/2 cup coconut milk (optional)

Butternut Squash Soup

How to Make It

1. Add all ingredients except the coconut milk to the slow cooker.
2. Cook on low 6-7 hours or high 3-4 hours.
3. Blend until smooth.
4. Stir in the coconut milk, if using. Season and serve.

Jane's Note

Blend the soup right in the slow cooker with an immersion blender if you have one - it saves a step and a dish. This is one of my favorite soups to have simmering on a fall afternoon; the whole house smells wonderful.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 days, or freeze for up to 3 months.

Creamy Chicken & Wild Rice Soup

Tender chicken, earthy wild rice and vegetables in a creamy broth.



SERVES

6

PREP

15 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY

55-70 min, depending on rice

Ingredients

2 tbsp butter

1 medium onion, diced

2 carrots, diced

2 celery stalks, diced

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 tsp dried thyme

3/4 cup uncooked wild rice blend

6 cups low-sodium chicken broth, plus more as needed

3 tbsp all-purpose flour

1 cup whole milk

3 cups cooked shredded chicken

1/2 cup heavy cream

Salt and black pepper, to taste

Creamy Chicken & Wild Rice Soup

How to Make It

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Cook onion, carrots and celery 7-8 minutes. Add garlic and thyme; stir 30 seconds.

2. Add rice and broth. Bring to a boil, cover loosely and simmer until the rice is tender, following its package timing, about 40-50 minutes. Add broth if needed.

3. Whisk flour into the cold milk until smooth. Stir into the simmering soup and cook gently 5 minutes, stirring.

4. Add cooked chicken and cream. Heat gently until the chicken reaches 165 F. Season to taste; add broth to loosen if desired.

Jane's Note

Wild rice blends vary. Let the rice become tender before adding the dairy.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate leftovers promptly in shallow, covered containers for up to 3-4 days. Reheat cooked leftovers to 165 F. Keep fresh toppings separate.

Creamy Tomato Basil Soup

This is the soup I turn to on a cold, gray afternoon when I want something warm on the stove without much fuss - crushed tomatoes, basil, and a splash of cream, all done in the slow cooker.



SERVES

6

PREP

10 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY

6-7 hours (low) or 3-4 hours (high)

Ingredients

- 1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Fresh basil, for garnish (optional)

Creamy Tomato Basil Soup

How to Make It

1. Add all ingredients except the cream to the slow cooker.
2. Cook on low 6-7 hours or high 3-4 hours.
3. Stir in the cream about 20 minutes before serving.
4. Season to taste and garnish with fresh basil.

Jane's Note

Let the cream sit in for the last 20 minutes rather than the whole cook time - it keeps the soup silky instead of separating. This is one of my go-to soups on a weeknight when I want dinner mostly done by the time I walk in the door. Can I make this ahead? Yes - it keeps well in the fridge and often tastes even better the next day. Can I freeze it? Freeze without the cream, then stir it in fresh when you reheat.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 days, or freeze without the cream for up to 3 months.

Loaded Baked Potato Soup

Loaded baked potato soup brings all the best toppings from a baked potato into one creamy bowl. Bacon, cheddar, sour cream, and green onions make it cozy enough for fall but easy enough for an ordinary weeknight.



SERVES
6

PREP
15 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY
35 min

Ingredients

6 slices bacon, chopped

1 medium onion, diced

3 garlic cloves, minced

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

4 cups low-sodium chicken broth

2 cups milk

2 lb russet potatoes, peeled and diced

1 cup shredded sharp cheddar, plus more for serving

1/2 cup sour cream

1/2 tsp kosher salt, plus more to taste

1/2 tsp black pepper

Sliced green onions for serving

Loaded Baked Potato Soup

How to Make It

1. Cook bacon in a large pot over medium heat until crisp. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate, leaving 2 tbsp drippings in the pot.
2. Add onion and cook 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and flour; cook 1 minute.
3. Slowly whisk in broth and milk. Add potatoes, salt, and pepper.
4. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce heat and simmer 18-22 minutes until potatoes are tender.
5. Mash some of the potatoes directly in the pot to thicken the soup while leaving plenty of pieces.
6. Remove from heat. Stir in cheddar and sour cream until smooth.
7. Serve topped with bacon, extra cheddar, green onions, and a small spoonful of sour cream.

Jane's Note

Remove the pot from direct heat before adding sour cream and cheese for the smoothest texture.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate up to 4 days. Reheat gently with a splash of milk. Freezing is not recommended because dairy and potatoes can separate.

Hearty Beef & Vegetable Soup

Tender beef cubes, potatoes and vegetables in a savory tomato broth.



SERVES
8

PREP
20 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY
About 2 hours

Ingredients

- 2 lb beef chuck, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 6 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 lb potatoes, diced
- 1 cup frozen peas
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Hearty Beef & Vegetable Soup

How to Make It

1. Pat beef dry and season. Brown in oil in batches over medium-high heat, about 3 minutes per side; transfer to a plate.

2. Soften onion 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and tomato paste 1 minute. Add broth, tomatoes, thyme, bay leaf and beef, scraping the pot.

3. Simmer gently, partially covered, 60-75 minutes, until beef is nearly tender.

4. Add carrots, celery and potatoes. Simmer 25-35 minutes until vegetables and beef are tender. Add peas for the last 5 minutes.

5. Remove bay leaf and season. Add broth if you prefer a thinner soup.

Jane's Note

Let tenderness guide you; beef chuck needs a gentle simmer and time.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate leftovers promptly in shallow, covered containers for up to 3-4 days. Reheat cooked leftovers to 165 F. Keep fresh toppings separate.

Broccoli Cheddar Soup

A creamy, cheesy bowl with tender broccoli and freshly grated cheddar.



SERVES
6

PREP
15 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY
25 min

Ingredients

- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 cups whole milk
- 4 cups small broccoli florets
- 1 medium carrot, grated
- 2 cups freshly grated sharp cheddar
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Broccoli Cheddar Soup

How to Make It

1. Melt butter over medium heat. Soften onion 5 minutes, add garlic, then stir in flour and cook 1 minute.

2. Gradually whisk in broth and milk. Add broccoli and carrot. Bring just to a simmer and cook gently 15-18 minutes, stirring, until tender.

3. Mash a few florets for texture. Remove from heat; stir in cheddar a handful at a time and add mustard.

4. Season to taste. Add a splash of warm broth if the soup is too thick.

Jane's Note

Freshly grated cheddar melts more smoothly. Keep the heat gentle after adding it.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate leftovers promptly in shallow, covered containers for up to 3-4 days. Reheat cooked leftovers to 165 F. Keep fresh toppings separate.

Classic Chicken Tortilla Soup

This is the soup I put out when I want dinner to feel a little like a party - chicken, black beans, and corn in a smoky, chili-spiced broth, with a toppings bar so everyone can build their own bowl.



SERVES

6

PREP

10 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY

6-7 hours (low) or 3-4 hours (high)

Ingredients

- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 (15 oz) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 oz) can corn, drained
- 1 (10 oz) can diced tomatoes with green chilies
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- Salt & pepper, to taste

Classic Chicken Tortilla Soup

How to Make It

1. Add all ingredients to the slow cooker.
2. Cook on low 6-7 hours or high 3-4 hours.
3. Remove chicken, shred, and return to the slow cooker.
4. Serve with tortilla strips, avocado, cilantro, and lime.

Jane's Note

Let everyone build their own bowl - it turns a weeknight soup into something that feels a little more like an occasion. This is one I make often when I want something warm on the table without spending the evening in the kitchen. Can I make this ahead? Yes - the soup base holds well in the fridge; just add fresh toppings when you serve. Can I make it spicier? Add a diced jalapeño or a pinch of cayenne along with the other seasonings.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate the soup base, without toppings, in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Creamy Mushroom Soup

Browned mushrooms and thyme give this simple soup its depth.



SERVES
6

PREP
15 min

COOK / ASSEMBLY
30 min

Ingredients

- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 1/2 lb cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp low-sodium soy sauce, optional
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Creamy Mushroom Soup

How to Make It

1. Heat butter and oil in a pot over medium-high heat. Brown mushrooms in two batches, about 5-7 minutes each. Reserve a few for topping.

2. Return mushrooms to the pot; add onion and cook 5 minutes. Add garlic and thyme, then flour; stir 1 minute.

3. Slowly stir in broth, scraping the pot. Simmer 12-15 minutes.

4. Blend part of the soup with an immersion blender, leaving plenty of mushroom pieces. Stir in cream and optional soy sauce; heat gently. Season and top with reserved mushrooms.

Jane's Note

Brown the mushrooms before adding liquid for a deeper, savory flavor.

Serving & Storage

Refrigerate leftovers promptly in shallow, covered containers for up to 3-4 days. Reheat cooked leftovers to 165 F. Keep fresh toppings separate.