



Bucky's Food Pantry
Recipe Booklet

Bucky's Pantry Recipe Book

Thinking outside the box for what's inside your food box

These recipes are intended to be used to make meals out of the food box items listed on our application process. However, there may be some seasonings and additional low cost items that can be found at many retail locations for \$1 or less. We realize not everyone has access to obtaining these additional items, so many of our recipes can be made either by substituting these items, or simply subtracting them from the recipe.

Let's also talk about substitutions, because we've all been there at some point. Sometimes we are lacking an ingredient or two for a recipe and these are key ingredients that make up some of the texture or flavor of the recipe you are working on. Butter, milk, and eggs are all staples for cooking, but they are not always available in food boxes from the pantry.

Egg substitutions

2 Tbsp water + 1 tsp vegetable oil + 1 tsp baking powder = 1 egg

3 Tbsp nut butter = 1 egg

1/4 cup carbonated water = 1 egg

1/4 cup pureed fruit = 1 egg

3 tbs mayonnaise

Butter substitutes

Olive oil, canola oil, vegetable oil, margarine, Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, or plain yogurt

Milk substitutes

Sour cream, evaporated milk, powdered milk, nut or soymilk, oat milk (recipe included),
unflavored coffee creamer, or water (if necessary)

Buttermilk substitute

1 cup milk + 1 tbsp vinegar, let sit for 10 minutes

Oat milk

1/2 cup rolled oats

2 cups water

Add 1/2 cup rolled oats to 2 cups water in a high-speed blender and blend on high for 30-45 seconds. Then strain through a clean t-shirt or towel for best results.

Pancakes

2 cup all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons white sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

1 egg, beaten

1 cup milk

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Make a well in the center, and pour in milk, egg and oil. Mix until smooth. Heat a lightly oiled griddle or frying pan over medium high heat. Pour or scoop the batter onto the griddle, using approximately 1/4 cup for each pancake. When bubbles begin forming near the middle, it's time to flip the pancake. Brown on both sides and serve hot.

To cook in microwave, pour about 3/4 cup of pancake mix onto a plate with raised edges. The size of the pancake depends on the size of your plate, but be aware that larger pancakes will take longer to cook. Put the plate in the microwave for 60 seconds. Adjust the time if you know that your microwave is particularly weak or strong. If the pancake is still runny, heat it for another ten seconds, but don't go overboard. There's no grill involved, so your pancake won't brown. If you do overcook your pancake, it will become dry, not burned.

*You can add 1 tsp vanilla and 1 Tbsp cinnamon, if desired. These can be served with fruit compote (recipe included in this booklet), syrup, bananas, Nutella, or peanut butter (depending on what you have on hand) to give you more options.

Simple biscuit recipe

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon salt

4 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon cream of tartar (can be skipped if necessary)

2 teaspoons white sugar

½ cup butter, chilled and diced

¾ cup milk

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). In a large bowl, sift together dry ingredients. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse oatmeal. Make a well in the center of the dry mixture and pour in the milk. Stir until dough begins to pull together then turn out onto a lightly floured surface. Press dough together and then roll out until 3/4 inch thick. Cut into 2 inch round biscuits and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes, or until golden.

Tortillas

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup water

3 tablespoons olive oil

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt. Stir in water and oil. Turn onto a floured surface; knead 10-12 times, adding a little flour or water if needed to achieve a smooth dough. Let rest for 10 minutes. Divide dough into 8 portions. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion into a 7-in. circle. In a greased cast-iron or other heavy skillet, cook tortillas over medium heat until lightly browned, about 1 minute on each side. Serve warm.

Tortilla chips

1 (12 ounce) package flour tortillas (or use recipe above)

1 drizzle olive oil

1 pinch salt to taste

Oven method: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Cut tortillas into 6 wedges each. Place on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Season with salt. Bake in the preheated oven until golden and crisp, about 5 minutes.

Microwave method: Working in batches if necessary, spread the tortilla wedges over the paper towel in a single layer, with an inch or so between the wedges. Microwave until the tortilla chips are crispy, but not burnt. The time will vary depending on the strength of your microwave and how many tortillas you are cooking. In our microwave, it's about a little less than 1 minute per tortilla. But start at half of that and add time as needed. Sprinkle with salt to serve.

Stovetop method: Pour oil into a medium skillet to a depth of 1/8 to 1/4 inch. (Make sure you are working with a completely dry pan or the oil will splatter as it heats.) Heat the oil on medium high heat until a small piece of tortilla placed in the oil sizzles, about 350°F. If a small tester piece of tortilla browns too quickly, the oil is too hot. Remove the pan from heat to let the oil cool a bit before continuing. Place a paper towel on a large plate and have several other paper towels ready. Place a handful of tortilla triangles into the hot oil, in a single layer. Use metal tongs, a metal slotted spoon, or long wooden chopsticks to distribute the tortilla triangles. Be sure they aren't overlapping and that all sides get coated with oil. Fry for about 2 minutes until the chips just begin to lightly brown and get firm, and are no longer pliable. Move chips to a paper-towel-lined plate: Use the tongs, slotted spoon or wooden chopsticks, remove the chips from the oil to the paper-towel-lined plate. Sprinkle with salt. Place another paper towel over the top of the chips to be ready for the next batch. (Note that as soon as you put the tortilla triangles into the hot oil, because you are working with such a small volume of oil, the oil temperature will lower. You can compensate for this by increasing the heat to high. As soon as the chips begin to color, reduce the heat to low, so the oil doesn't overheat in between batches.) Continue to cook the chips, working in batches, placing the freshly fried chips over a new layer of paper towel each time, and sprinkling with salt. When the chips are all fried, pat any excess oil from them with a fresh paper towel, and eat! These chips are best eaten when warm and freshly made.

Hard Taco Shells

Magically transform a soft tortilla into a hard taco shell with the help of your microwave. Simply place the tortilla inside a tall, microwave-safe cup, heat it up for about one minute and you now have a crunchy, crispy taco shell.

Crepes

2 cup all-purpose flour

2 eggs

½ cup milk

½ cup water

¼ teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons butter, melted

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour and the eggs. Gradually add in the milk and water, stirring to combine. Add the salt and butter; beat until smooth. Heat a lightly oiled griddle or frying pan over medium high heat. Pour or scoop the batter onto the griddle, using approximately 1/4 cup for each crepe. Tilt the pan with a circular motion so that the batter coats the surface evenly. Cook the crepe for about 2 minutes, until the bottom is light brown. Loosen with a spatula, turn and cook the other side. Serve hot.

*Crepes can be used for sweet or savory dishes. They also make a great substitute for meals requiring tortillas or wraps

Naan

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

2 tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

3/4 tsp baking powder

2 tsp oil

1/2 cup milk

Combine all dry ingredients, and whisk together. Create a well in the middle of the dry ingredients, and add the oil and milk. Mix everything together until it forms a ball. Turn out on the counter and knead until very smooth and elastic — at least 5 minutes — adding more flour as necessary. Let the dough rest for 10 minutes. Divide into 8-10 equal pieces. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Roll one piece of dough until very thin (less than 1/8"). If the skillet isn't non-stick, melt some butter before each piece. One at a time, cook the naan for about 90 seconds, or until parts are blackening, on each side. When they are done, you can brush them with butter and add seasonings (cilantro, garlic, etc.), if you want.

*Naan makes an excellent pizza crust or garlic bread

Fruit syrup/compote from canned fruit

1 16 oz can of fruit (pears, peaches, pineapple, fruit cocktail, mandarin oranges, etc)

2 tablespoons honey or sugar

Dash of salt

Drain half of the juice from the can. Cut fruit into thin slices. If you're using small berries like blueberries or raspberries, you can use them whole. In a medium saucepan, combine your fruit of choice, sweetener of choice and dash of salt. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally for 5-7 minutes. Once boiling, reduce the heat to medium. If you're using chunky fruit or prefer a smoother consistency, mash the fruit with a potato masher or serving fork until it reaches your desired consistency. Continue simmering, stirring often, until the compote has condensed to about half of its original volume, about 5 minutes. Remove the compote from the heat. If you'd like it sweeter, you can stir in more sugar or honey, to taste. If you'd like it to be more smooth, mash it some more. Let cool for a few minutes before serving. Allow leftover compote to cool completely before covering and refrigerating for up to 10 days. (This recipe can also be made in the microwave using a microwave safe dish. Make sure to leave room for bubbling so as not to make a mess of your microwave.)

*This can be used with biscuits, crepes, waffles, or pancakes in place of syrup or jelly

Banana bread

3 ripe bananas, mashed

1 cup white sugar

1 egg

1/4 cup melted butter

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan. Combine bananas, sugar, egg, and butter together in a bowl. Mix flour and baking soda together in a separate bowl; stir into banana mixture until batter is just mixed. Stir salt into batter. Pour batter into the prepared loaf pan. Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted in the center of the bread comes out clean, about 1 hour.

*For added flavor, coat the pan in a mixture of cinnamon and sugar. It will give you a delicious crust.

*Bananas can be subbed for canned fruit of any kind. (Just make sure to drain the fruit and mash it)

*Chocolate chips are also great in banana bread

Bean burritos

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| 1 can (16 ounces) refried beans | 1 cup salsa |
| 1 cup cooked long grain rice | 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided |
| 12 flour tortillas (6 inches) | Shredded lettuce, optional |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl, combine beans, salsa, rice and 1 cup cheese. Spoon about 1/3 cup off-center on each tortilla. Fold the sides and ends over filling and roll up. Arrange burritos in a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese. Cover and bake until heated through, 20-25 minutes. If desired, topped with lettuce.

Refried beans

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| 1 tablespoons canola oil | 1 garlic cloves, peeled (1 Tbsp garlic powder as substitute) |
| 1 (15 ounce) cans pinto beans | 1/2 teaspoon cumin |
| 1/2 teaspoon chili powder | pinch of salt to taste |
| 1/4 lime, juiced (optional) | |

Heat canola oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat. Cook garlic cloves in hot oil, turning once, until brown on both sides, 4 to 5 minutes. Smash garlic cloves in skillet with a fork. Stir pinto beans, cumin, chili powder, and salt into mashed garlic and cook until beans are thoroughly heated, about 5 minutes. Stir occasionally. Smash bean mixture with a potato masher to desired texture. Squeeze lime juice over smashed beans and stir until combined.

Minestrone soup

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| 1 (15oz) can of mixed vegetables | 1 (15oz) can of beans |
| 1 cup dry pasta | 12 oz water |
| Ramen noodle flavor packet | chopped fresh vegetables (optional) |
| 1 potato cut into cubes | ¾ cup pasta sauce |
| Salt and pepper to taste | |

Combine water, cubed potato, ramen noodle seasoning packet, dry pasta, and pasta sauce in large pot leaving room to keep from boiling over. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium. Add vegetables and beans. Allow pot to simmer, stirring frequently, for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to soup to cool for 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.

White rice

Rice to Water Ratio:

AMOUNT OF UNCOOKED RICE	WATER NEEDED FOR PERFECT RICE
1/4 cup of rice	1/2 cup water
1/3 cup of rice	2/3 cup of water
1/2 cup of rice	1 cup of water
3/4 cup of rice	1 1/2 cups of water
1 cup of rice	2 cups of water
1 1/2 cup of rice	3 cups of water
2 cups of rice	4 cups of water

Stove top directions

Measure and rinse rice. You will need a small pot with a lid. A capacity of 1 to 3 quarts is good. Bring the water to a strong boil at highest temperature. Add the rice to the boiling water. Swirl the rice once with a spoon so that it covers the bottom of the pot uniformly. Watch the rice boil until you see the bubbles form a pock-marked pattern with its vigorous boiling. This takes 1 to 2 minutes. Lower the heat to medium heat. Your stove may need to be set slightly higher or lower. You want the heat to be high enough so that steam is always being formed in the pot, but not so hot that the rice scorches on the bottom of the pot. When the boiling dies down a bit, cover the pot and set the timer to 20 minutes. Remove the lid of the pot, and your rice is done. For your first batch, test the rice with a fork and give it a taste test. It should be fluffy and tender. (The texture of fried rice benefits from a firmer rice kernel. Use 1 1/2 cups of water instead of 1 2/3 cups of water to achieve this texture. When it is done, leave the lid off the pot and allow the rice to cool. Then use the cooled rice in your fried rice recipe. The cooling is optional.)

Microwave Directions

Measure out the rice and water in the correct ratio. Add the rice and water together in a microwave-safe bowl. Cover the bowl. Use a bowl that holds at least 2 1/2 to 3 qt., keeping in mind that rice triples in volume when cooked. Add butter or margarine and salt, if desired, to the rice. Place the bowl in the microwave. Microwave the rice on high for 5 minutes. (For long-grain rice, reduce power to 50 percent and microwave for 15 minutes more. For parboiled and brown rice, reduce power to 50 percent and microwave for 20 minutes more). Remove the bowl from the microwave and let it stand for 5 minutes. Do not disturb the rice during the resting period. Stirring the rice will release excess starch and make the rice sticky. Check the rice after 5 minutes and fluff with a fork if all liquid has been absorbed. If the rice is still hard and the liquid is not absorbed, microwave the bowl in 2-minute intervals until the rice is tender and the water is absorbed.

*Chicken broth can be used in place of water, if desired.

Peanut butter snack balls

1 ½ cups Creamy Peanut Butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 cups powdered sugar, or as needed

½ cup butter, softened
½ teaspoon salt

Combine peanut butter, butter, vanilla and salt in large bowl. Beat until blended. Add 2 cups powdered sugar, beating until blended. Beat in additional powdered sugar until mixture, when shaped into a ball, will stay on a toothpick. Shape into 1-inch balls. Refrigerate.

*Variations- If you only have regular sugar, you can microwave the peanut butter and butter to make it easier to stir in the sugar and get it to blend without being gritty. The peanut butter balls can be used to mix in other ingredients such as chocolate chips, coconut flakes, oatmeal, crushed cereal, or dried fruit like raisins. They can also be rolled in crushed cereal for a crunchy coating, or rolled in a mixture of cinnamon and sugar for a bit of extra sweetness. Another idea is to dip them in melted chocolate using a toothpick, making them a buckeye ball.

Cheesy beans and rice (using mac n cheese powder)

1 (15oz) can kidney, pinto, or black beans
Mac n cheese packet
½ cup water

2 cups cooked rice (see recipe on previous page)
Taco seasoning packet (hot sauce works as a substitute)
2 Tbsp oil (any kind is fine)

Combine water, oil, taco seasoning packet, and mac and cheese packet into a medium to large size pot. Stir until evenly mixed. Turn stove on medium heat and allow mixture to begin bubbling, while stirring frequently. Add your choice of beans and prepared rice. Stir until beans and rice are evenly coated. Remove from heat and allow to rest 5 minutes before serving. Can be served as is, or folded into a tortilla.

*Sour cream and salsa are great additions to this recipe, too

Veggie pasta w/o sauce, light oil

1 cup cooked pasta
1 (15oz) can of mixed vegetables
1 Tbsp garlic powder

3 Tbsp oil or butter
salt and pepper to taste

Combine cooked pasta, oil/butter, and mixed vegetables in medium to large pot. Turn stove on medium heat and stir to evenly coat pasta and veggies with oil. Stir in garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Remove from heat and serve.

*You can use fresh veggies of your choice if they are available to you. You can also add in different herbs and seasonings if you have them on hand. This recipe is great with parmesan cheese added, or crushed red pepper flakes. Play with different seasonings until you find what works for you.

Microwaved baked potatoes

Wash your potatoes and pierce the skin with a fork. Microwave them on high for 6-10 minutes, depending on the size of the potato. Add any toppings you'd like.

*That jar of salsa from your box goes great on baked potatoes!

Easy potato soup recipe

4 large potatoes, microwaved and peeled	1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 Tbsp dried minced onions	1/2 cup hot water
1 packet chicken ramen seasoning	1 (12oz) can evaporated milk
1 Tbsp garlic salt	1/4 cup butter (optional)
Mac and cheese packet (optional)	5 slices bacon, cooked and chopped (optional)

Wash 4 potatoes and microwave them for 8-10 minutes until tender. Allow potatoes to cool. Peel skins by hand and use fork or potato masher to mash them. Add oil, butter, garlic, minced onions, ramen packet, mac and cheese packet, and water to large pot. Turn stove on medium heat and allow ingredients in pot to simmer while stirring frequently. When bubbles begin to form, add in mashed potatoes and evaporated milk while continuing to stir. Reduce heat to low and allow to cook for 10-12 minute while occasionally stirring. Remove from heat and top with chopped bacon if desired.

*If you don't have access to a stovetop, this recipe can easily be made in the microwave using a large glass bowl

Chicken vegetable soup/ramen

1 (12.5oz) can chunk chicken breast	1 ramen noodle flavor packet
1 (15oz) can of mixed vegetables	1 cup of water
½ cup dry pasta or noodles from ramen packet	

Pour canned chicken and juice into pot. Turn stove on high heat. Use spatula to cut chicken into bite sized pieces. Add water, ramen noodle flavor packet, mixed vegetables, and pasta or ramen to pot. Stir and bring to a low boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer, stirring frequently, for 6-8 minutes until noodles or ramen reach desired tenderness.

*If you choose to use the ramen noodles, try cracking an egg in this recipe right as the mixture comes to a boil. It's so good!

Easy chicken chili

½ jar of pasta sauce
1 (15oz) can kidney beans
1 packet of taco seasoning

1 (12.5 oz) can chunk chicken breast
1 (15oz) can diced tomatoes or Rotel

Drain ¾ liquid from canned chicken and add to pot. Turn stove on medium heat. Use spatula to chop the chicken into smaller pieces and add the taco seasoning. Turn chicken until it's fully coated in taco seasoning. Drain ¾ liquid from canned tomatoes and all liquid from kidney beans. Add tomatoes, kidney beans, and pasta sauce to mixture in pot. Stir frequently until all items are mixed and thoroughly heated.

*Bonus, this will make an excellent chili mac when served over cooked pasta

Garlic Bread Parmigiana

4 slices bread
Garlic powder
4-6 oz pasta sauce from jar

4 Tbsp oil or butter
4 oz mozzarella

Use oil or butter to lightly coat one side of sliced bread. Sprinkle garlic across the tops of bread, and bake at 350 degrees until toasted. Remove from oven, and raise temperature to 375 degrees. Alternate slices of garlic bread and mozzarella in a baking dish; top with pasta sauce and bake until golden and bubbly, 20 minutes

Spanish rice

Original recipe yields 4 servings

1 cup uncooked white rice
2 cups water

1 teaspoon minced garlic (optional)
1-1.5 cups of salsa (depending on personal preference)

Combine the rice with the garlic in a large saucepan. Pour water and salsa into the rice mixture. Bring the water to a full boil and then reduce the temperature to simmer. Simmer for 20 minutes or until the rice is tender. Fluff the rice when finished.

Dumpling dough

1 ¼ cups unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

3/8 cup plus 1 tablespoon warm water (about 105 to 110°F)

Put the flour in a large bowl. Add all of the water. Using a rubber spatula or a spoon, stir the water and flour together until a rough ball of dough starts to form. Use your hands to start kneading the dough and incorporating any remaining flour. The dough should feel slightly tacky but not damp. It should not stick to your fingers. Dust your clean work surface with flour. Remove the dough from the bowl and knead for about 2 minutes. It should feel smooth. Cover the dough with a damp towel or plastic wrap and let it rest on the counter for a minimum of 20 minutes. (While it doesn't need much longer than that, it won't hurt the dough if it happens to rest longer. This dough will hold for several hours at room temperature. It will get stickier, so you will have to knead in about 1 to 2 tablespoons of flour to refresh it. It's best to make this dough the same day you want to use it.) Once rested, divide the dough in half. On a surface lightly dusted with flour, roll each half into a rope that's about 3/4 inch in diameter and about 18 inches in length. Using a knife, cut each rope into pieces that are about 3/4 inch thick. You can now form these into small chunks to use as is in chicken and dumplings, or you can flatten them and hand form them into pouches to hold meats, cheeses, veggies, etc. If you choose the dumpling pouch method, they can be boiled in chicken stock and they make a lovely dumpling soup. If you choose to use them for chicken and dumplings, the recipe is up next.

Chicken and Dumplings

Dumpling dough (from recipe above) 2 chicken ramen noodle flavor packets

1 (12.5oz) can chunk chicken breast 3 cups water

Salt and pepper to taste

Combine water, entire can of chicken (undrained), and ramen noodle flavor packet in medium to large pot. Turn stove on high heat until bubbling, stirring frequently. Reduce to medium heat. Add dumplings a few at a time, stirring in between. Cook until dumplings are fluffy and no longer doughy in the center. Add pepper and salt to taste.

3 ingredient peanut butter cookies

1 cup peanut butter 1 egg

1 cup white sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Mix peanut butter, sugar, and egg together in a bowl using an electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Roll mixture into small balls and arrange on a baking sheet; flatten each with a fork, making a crisscross pattern. Bake in the preheated oven for 10 minutes. Cool cookies on the baking sheet for 2 minutes before moving to a plate.

Cobbler

1 cup self-rising flour
1 cup milk
1 (16 ounce) can fruit (you can use any canned fruit you have on hand)

1 cup melted butter
1 cup white sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly butter one 2 quart baking dish. Combine the flour, butter, milk, sugar and fruit. Mix together and pour into prepared baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 45 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

Oatmeal cookies

Original recipe yields 24 servings

¼ cup packed brown sugar
¼ cup applesauce
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ cup raisins

¼ cup white sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup rolled oats
½ cup chopped walnuts (Optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a cookie sheet. In a medium bowl, stir together the brown sugar, white sugar, and applesauce. Sift together the flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon; stir into the applesauce mixture. Add the rolled oats, raisins and chopped nuts (if desired); stir until combined. Drop by rounded teaspoonful onto the prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 10 minutes in the preheated oven. Allow cookies to cool slightly before removing from the baking sheet.

Rice pudding

Original recipe yields 4 servings

1 3/4 cups water
½ cup white sugar
1 pinch ground cinnamon

½ cup long grain rice
1 can evaporated milk (can use coffee creamer as milk substitute)
1 tablespoon butter (can use 1 teaspoon cooking oil as substitution)

Bring water and rice to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until rice is tender and water has been absorbed, about 20. Add 2% milk, evaporated milk, sugar, and butter; stir well and cook until creamy, about 20 minutes longer. Serve sprinkled with cinnamon.

No bake peanut butter cookies

1 cup white sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 ½ cups crisp rice cereal

1 cup white corn syrup
2 cups peanut butter

Cook over medium heat the white sugar and the corn syrup for one minute. Remove from heat and add the vanilla, peanut butter and crispy rice cereal. Drop by teaspoons onto wax paper. The cookies will be slightly soft when done.

Easy Muffins made with canned or fresh fruit

1 cup milk
⅓ cup vegetable oil
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ cup fresh blueberries (or any drained and mashed canned fruit)

1 egg
2 cups all-purpose flour
½ cup white sugar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (205 degrees C). Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners. If using canned fruit, drained and mash fruit with a fork and set aside. In a large bowl, stir together milk, egg, and oil. Add flour, baking powder, sugar, and fruit; gently mix the batter with only a few strokes. Spoon batter into cups. Bake for 20 minutes. Serve hot.

*The secret is in NOT mixing the batter too much: the less you mix, the better the muffins are. You can replace the blueberries with chocolate chips, too! (Try these with canned pineapple!)

Poke Cake

Original recipe yields 12 servings

1 package white cake mix
1 cup boiling water
1 (16oz) container frozen whipped topping, thawed

1 (3oz) package fruit flavored Jell-O mix
1 can cherry pie filling (can substitute with canned fruit compote)

Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for one 9x13 inch cake. Remove cake from oven. Poke holes at once down through cake with a fork. Holes should be at 1 inch intervals. While the cake cools, combine the gelatin with boiling water. Pour gelatin mixture over the cake. Top with the cherry pie filling or canned fruit compote, then cover with whipped topping. Refrigerate cake for one hour before serving.

Foamy latte

Be your own at-home barista. Fill a glass jar halfway with milk and microwave for one minute until hot. Screw on the lid and shake vigorously for 30 seconds, pour the milk into a mug, add espresso or coffee and enjoy.

Easy mocha coffee

Try using hot chocolate mix as a replacement for coffee creamer or milk

Leftover coffee?

Don't pour your old coffee down the drain; pour it into your ice cube tray! After freezing your coffee into ice cubes, you can use them in your iced coffees in the future so that they won't get watered down.

Cold Brew Coffee

Pour ground coffee into a large bowl or measuring cup. Add in cold water, and stir to combine. Then cover and refrigerate for at least 12 hours. Once it has sat for 12 hours in the refrigerator, all you need to do is strain it. Get a separate bowl ready and place a fine mesh strainer on top of it with a cheesecloth. If you don't have either, you can use part of a clean old t shirt. Pour the coffee and grounds into the cheesecloth or t-shirt cloth and let it sit until the liquid has drained through. Remove the cheesecloth and strainer or t-shirt cloth and serve, or cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

Microwave potato chips

3 medium red potatoes

1/4 cup olive oil

1 teaspoon salt

herbs and seasonings (your choice)

Layer three paper towels on a microwave-safe plate; set aside. Scrub potatoes and cut into 1/16-in.-thick slices. Brush slices on both sides with olive oil and lightly sprinkle with salt and curry. Arrange on prepared plate (do not overlap). Microwave on high for 3 minutes; turn and microwave 2-3 minutes longer or until chips are dry and brittle. Repeat with remaining potatoes, oil and seasonings. Let chips cool for at least 1 minute before serving. Store in an airtight container.

Microwave Corn on the cob

Stick a rinsed, unshucked ear of corn on a plate in the microwave and cook on high for 3 minutes or longer, depending on size of corn. Let cool enough to handle before shucking.

Microwave bacon

When to use this method: The microwave is best for quickly cooking a few strips at a time.

Place 2-3 sheets of paper towel in a microwave-safe dish. Top with up to 4 slices of bacon. Place 1-2 sheets of paper towel on top. Microwave approximately 1 minute for every piece of bacon. Thick bacon will need a little more time and thin bacon will need less. Remove and place on serving plate when it's just a little underdone (bacon will carry-over cook a little).

Microwave eggs

Lightly spray a mug with nonstick spray. Crack two eggs inside. Top with a splash of milk or water. Sprinkle some salt and pepper over eggs. Stir with a fork to combine. Microwave at 30-second intervals, stirring after each, for a total of 90 seconds.

*Sprinkle in some veggies, meat, or cheese for an easy omelet. You can also use this recipe to fill a tortilla for a fast and easy breakfast burrito.

Microwave steamed vegetables

Cover vegetables with a damp paper towels and microwave on high for a few minutes until the vegetables are tender. Season to taste. Be careful of heat and steam from paper towels and food when removing.

*This technique works great for green veggies like broccoli, spinach, green beans and Brussels sprouts.

Homemade microwave soft spreadable cheese

2 cups milk

2 Tbsp vinegar

¼ tsp salt

Microwave milk in glass bowl for 1-2 minutes. Add vinegar and salt. Stir vigorously. Microwave mixture for another 5 minutes. Cover second bowl with cheesecloth or clean cloth from an old t-shirt. Strain cheese through cloth to remove liquid. Move cheese curds from cloth into an airtight container, or use immediately as a cheese spread.

Microwave baked apples

- 2 apples, cored and sliced
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp butter
- 2 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

In a bowl, mix the brown sugar, cinnamon, butter, and nutmeg. Spoon the sugar mixture over the apple. Place the apples in a deep casserole dish or microwave safe bowl and cover. Microwave for 3 1/2 to 4 minutes or until tender. Let the apples sit for a couple minutes before serving.

Microwave southwest chicken casserole

- 1 (12.5 oz) can chicken chunks, drained
- 1 ¼ cups water
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 (4 oz) can diced green chiles
- 1 (10.75 oz) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 2 Tbsp dried minced onion
- 2 cups rice

In a large bowl, combine the chicken, chiles, soup, cheese, onions, salt, pepper and water. Pour the mixture into a microwave safe 9x13 inch casserole dish. Add the rice. The mixture should be the consistency of soupy pancake batter. Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap and microwave for about 15-20 minutes (depending on the microwave).

Microwave tuna mac

- 1 package mac and cheese
- 2 Tbsp butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 (5oz) can tuna

Pour noodles in to large microwave safe bowl and fill with water leaving ¼ the bowl empty for boiling as to not bubble over. Microwave on high for 10-12 minutes, depending on how firm or soft you'd like your noodles. Drain water, but do not rinse. Add butter, milk, tuna, and cheese pack. Stir until cheese packet is well blended. Add salt and pepper if desired.

Microwave apple butter

- 1 (24oz) jar applesauce
- 1 Tbsp ground cinnamon
- ½ cup maple syrup

Combine applesauce, maple syrup, and cinnamon in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave on high for 15 minutes. Stir well, and microwave 5 minutes more. Cool and transfer to a jar. Store in refrigerator.

Microwave pumpkin butter

1 (15oz) can pumpkin pie filling 1 Tbsp vanilla extract

3 Tbsp butter

Combine ingredients in a microwave safe dish and stir until ingredients are well mixed. Microwave for 3 minutes. Stir again. Microwave for an additional 5 minutes. Stir once more. Cool and transfer to a jar. Store in refrigerator. *This is great on toast, croissants, pancakes, waffles, or as a topping for ice cream or oatmeal.

5 minute savory breakfast mug

1 cup stale bread pieces

1/4 cup pre-cooked chopped sausage

1/4 cup finely chopped vegetables

2 Tbsp shredded cheese

1 Tbsp butter

3 Tbsp milk

1 large egg

Pinch of salt and pepper

Tear or cut the bread into 1/2-inch pieces. Chop the meat and vegetables into small pieces. Shred the cheese. Add the butter to the bottom of a large mug (10-12oz.) and microwave on high for 20 seconds or until it is fully melted. Whisk in the milk, egg, salt, and pepper with a fork. Stir the meat, vegetables, and cheese into the milk and egg mixture first, then gently fold in the bread cubes until they are fully saturated. Let the mug sit for one minute to fully absorb the liquid, then microwave on high for about 90 seconds, or until the center is solid and it has begun to pull away from the mug around the edges. Serve hot.

Microwave Cheesecake

1 tablespoon butter

2 sheets graham cracker

4 oz cream cheese, softened

2 tablespoons sugar

3 drops vanilla extract

Melt the butter in a small microwaveable ramekin. Tilt the ramekin to coat the sides. Crush the graham crackers into fine crumbs, then add to the ramekin with the butter and mix well. With a spoon, press the crust evenly against the bottom of the dish. In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla, stirring until there are no lumps. Spread the filling on top of the graham cracker crust. Microwave for at least 4 minutes, 45 seconds at a time, at half power. Make sure the cheesecake does not bubble over the sides of the ramekin. Chill in the freezer for at least 30 minutes, until completely cool to the touch. With a knife, loosen the edges of the cheesecake, then invert onto a plate, or eat straight from the dish.

*Top with a few raspberries, chocolate chips, candies, or even some of the fruit compote (recipe included).

